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The Next NATO

Building an American Commonwealth of Nations

James Kurth

EXACTLY FIFTY years ago, Washington was the scene of what was then called the Great Debate. The issue in 1951 was the conversion of the rather spare North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 into a genuine American military commitment: an integrated military organization under an American supreme commander and the permanent stationing of U.S. troops in Europe. Thirty-one years before that, Washington was the scene of an even more famous Great Debate; the issues in 1920 were U.S. membership in the League of Nations and a permanent U.S. security guarantee to Britain and France.

This June, President Bush proposed in a major address in Warsaw that "Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between" be admitted to NATO, with invitations for some to be issued at the NATO summit to be held in Prague in November 2002. Although the President did not mention specific countries, it was taken for granted that he had the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in mind. Other nations that have applied to become members of NATO and that are being given positive consideration are Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria.[1]

The admission of these countries into NATO would entail an extension and transformation of U.S. military commitments as serious as those at issue in 1951 and in 1920. But there is little sign thus far of any Great Debate, just as there was no such debate—except in some highly cloistered intellectual circles—during the mid- to late-1990s over the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. This lack of public political interest is all the more curious given that great powers traditionally have considered their alliance obligations and military commitments to be at the heart of their foreign policies, and that both the First and Second World Wars began because particular great powers were in fact honoring such commitments. NATO is supposed to be a military alliance, but there has been almost no public discussion about the implications of NATO enlargement for its military strategy. And although there has been much talk about not drawing a new line that would divide Europe like the old Yalta agreement did, the whole point of a military alliance is to

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[1]The prospective new members of NATO and the standards for admission are discussed by Jeffrey Simon, "NATO's Membership Action Plan and Defense Planning: Credibility at Stake", *Problems of Post-Communism* (May/June 2001).

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create an *align*ment—that is, to draw a line. Obviously, the line that will be drawn by round II of NATO enlargement will be one between Europe and Russia. Russia has consistently argued that it should be defined as part of Europe, and it has even proposed that it be admitted into NATO. Conversely, the United States has referred to almost every other country in Europe as a prospective member of NATO, but it has consistently refused to include Russia among them. The line, then, is bound to remain.

The U.S. refusal to consider NATO membership for Russia is not based upon a Russian military threat to NATO's prospective new members, however. In the minds of the U.S. foreign policy leadership, NATO enlargement is not really about the expansion of a military alliance but about something else.[2] Its real purpose is to consolidate Europe into a coherent and integral part of the American vision and version of world order; it is to make of Europe a solid base and loyal partner in the worldwide struggle now developing over the grand American project of globalization. But because NATO nevertheless remains a military alliance—Article V guarantee and all—its enlargement will have serious military and strategic consequences.

Globalization is US

FOR THE PAST decade, the grand project of the United States in world affairs has been globalization. Indeed, globalization has been so central to the United States, and the United States has been so central to world affairs, that it has given its name to the new era that has succeeded the Cold War; more than anything else, the contemporary period has been defined as the era of globalization. Globalization itself has been defined by American leaders as the spread of free markets, open borders, liberal democracy and the rule of law—in short, an essentially high-tech Wilsonian world in which the main elements of democratic peace theory are assumed to be valid.[3] The Clinton Administration was particularly consistent in promoting globalization and each of these elements. The Bush Administration has been less explicit about doing so, but its business wing is pressing for free markets and open borders, while its neo-conservative wing is pressing for liberal democracy and the rule of law, at least as they interpret it.

Most accounts of globalization have assumed that the phenomenon is indeed global in its scope, or that it will soon become so. This assumption is mistaken, and the awareness that globalization is not global, and probably never will be, will itself soon become widespread.

After a decade of experience with globalization, we can see a greatly variegated map of the globe, and the reality that it presents is not a linear and smooth progression, but a lumpy and jagged construction. It is a pattern of uneven development, uneven acceptance and uneven resistance. When even the U.S. State Department—one of the most enthusiastic promoters of globalization—identifies 27 countries (including such major ones as Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria and Colombia) that Americans should avoid entirely because of war, crime, anti-American hostility or simply chaos, it is clear that globalization's ambit is hardly complete.

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[2]Others have recognized the political transformation of NATO and, in that light, have proposed that it include Russia. See, from these pages, Coral Bell, "Why Russia Should Join NATO" (Winter 1990/91); and Charles A. Kupchan, "Rethinking Europe" (Summer 1999). See also Timothy Garton Ash, "Russia's Eventual Place in NATO", *New York Times*, July 22, 2001.

[3]See Michael Mandelbaum, "Bad Statesman, Good Prophet", *The National Interest* (Summer 2000).

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Indeed, vast areas of the globe are *less* integrated into the global economy and a world order than they were fifty years ago. This is the case with most of Africa, most of Southwest Asia, an increasing part of Southeast Asia, and an increasing part of the Andean region of South America. These four regions add up to a vast realm where globalization has already failed and where it is highly unlikely to succeed in the foreseeable future. There has been much talk about "the African renaissance", "the Islamic resurgence", and "Plan Colombia", but no one has offered a credible plan or even hope for turning these regions into stable parts of the global economy and world order. On the contrary, they have created their own perverse, underworld version of the global economy consisting of a very widespread traffic in narcotics, diamonds, weapons and human beings—all run by global criminal or terrorist organizations.

Furthermore, major powers, in particular China and Russia, have declared that they oppose the American version of globalization. China is probably the biggest single winner from the globalization of the past decade, and Russia may well be the biggest single loser, but they can agree on one thing: they are not going to be globalized in the American way. There are also those "rogue states" (or "states of concern"), especially Iraq and Iran but also Afghanistan and North Korea, which persist in trying to thwart the American project.

The regions where the American way of globalization is succeeding are actually rather few, and together they add up to much less than half the area of the globe and much less than half its population. These regions include almost all of Europe, much of Latin America, some of the countries on the periphery of East Asia, and of course Australia and New Zealand. As it happens, these four regions largely correspond to the U.S. system of alliances as it existed fifty years ago (NATO, the OAS, a series of bilateral treaties with Asian countries, and ANZUS). The extent of "globalization" in 2001 is not that different from the extent of the "Free World" in 1951.

There is one big difference, of course, and that involves what was then Eastern Europe—the communist Europe—and what is now once again central Europe along with eastern Europe—a liberal-democratic and free-market Europe.[4] This is also the region where the recent round of NATO expansion occurred and where the second round of expansion is proposed. It is this difference that links the American way of globalization with the American proposals for NATO enlargement.

Globalization and America's Europe

IT IS NATURAL that the United States should want to expand and secure its new trade and investment relations with central and eastern Europe. More fundamentally, however, it seeks to consolidate all of Europe—western, central and eastern—into a secure core of the American way of globalization. It is crucial that this European core be integrally joined with the American one (now defined by NAFTA) and that it accepts American leadership on matters of major importance.

It might seem odd to imagine that Europe will accept American leadership at a time when much of the European media

[4]The phrases Eastern Europe and Western Europe, their adjectives in capital letters, were neologisms of the early Cold War that elided geography and ideology. Now that the ideological distinction is moot, it no longer makes sense to capitalize these adjectives. We follow this rule throughout this essay: references to these regions in Cold War times are capitalized; those since 1989 are not.

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is criticizing American policies on issues ranging from the death penalty to global warming agreements, and when many young Europeans are demonstrating against globalization. But in truth there is now a vast realm of Europe that is willingly recreating itself in the American image.[5] This is especially the case with people engaged in the new information economy and the technical professions. It is also especially the case with the peoples of central Europe and the Baltic states. It is true that many of the peoples there are not enthusiastic about NATO, especially after its experience with Kosovo, but they do want to be part of an American alliance, even of something that would be akin to an American commonwealth. They loathe the Russians, are suspicious of other Europeans, and are attracted to the Americans. For these central and east Europeans, it is true today what was true for many West Europeans fifty years ago: the purpose of NATO is to keep the Russians out, the Americans in and the Germans down.

At the same time, the United States seeks to influence the economic and diplomatic policies of European states and to balance the weight of the European Union within the wider European continent. The countries of central and eastern Europe are generally less critical and more accepting of America than those of western Europe, and U.S. objectives can best be met by advancing the fortunes and status of the former as a balance to the latter. This would be furthered by the enlargement of the European Union; but it would be furthered with even more assurance by the enlargement of NATO. The result of NATO enlargement would be the consolidation of Europe under American leadership and its rendering into an embodiment and an expression of the American way of globalization. The inclusion of the Baltic states would consolidate this American-led European core up to the frontier where the American project of globalization meets one of its principal opponents—Russia. The inclusion of the Balkan states would consolidate this core up to the frontier where the American project meets another set of opponents—the rogue states of the Middle East.

NATO Enlargement: A Default Position

WHAT MIGHT be the ideal form of organization for this American-led Europe, which will be characterized by all the goals of American-style globalization—free markets, open borders, liberal democracy and the rule of law—all within a security community or zone of peace? It would actually be some sort of American Commonwealth of Nations, rather like the British Commonwealth of Nations of the first half of the 20th century (composed of Britain and the "dominions" of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa). But this is not a practical possibility. The idea of an American Commonwealth would seem too close to the idea of an American Empire, and it would be unacceptable to both Europeans and Americans.

There is only one American-led organization for Europe that can have legitimacy among the major states of Europe, and that is NATO. The fact that NATO is supposed to be primarily a military alliance makes it ill-suited for organizing all of the complex relations between Europe and America, which add up to something actually as dense as an American Commonwealth. On the other hand, it is because NATO is supposed to be

[5] A comprehensive account of European attitudes toward America is given by Josef Joffe, "Who's Afraid of Mr. Big?", *The National Interest* (Summer 2001).

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a military alliance that provides useful military benefits to the west Europeans that it can remain legitimate while actually furthering other purposes and performing other functions. But it is, of course, the construably narrow military character of NATO, which makes it more legitimate with the west Europeans, that makes it illegitimate with the Russians.

An economic organization, in contrast, would very likely be legitimate to Russia. Russia would agree to the enlargement of the European Union to include the Baltic and the Balkan nations. This would not be that different from its earlier agreement to the EU's admission of Austria, Sweden and Finland, other nations that have been of strategic concern to Russia but that have never become members of NATO. The European Union should have taken the lead in admitting Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary before NATO did, and it should do the same for the Baltic and the Balkan countries now. However desirable this would be for international comity, it is unlikely to happen.

The admission of new members into NATO, even though they are weak militarily, does not entail any immediate and substantial costs for the existing members; the price that they will have to pay to help upgrade the militaries of the new entrants is modest. However, the admission of new members into the European Union, since they are poor economically, does entail immediate and substantial costs for the existing members; the price they would have to pay to help upgrade the economies of the new members is large and burdensome. It is not surprising that the EU's current members have persisted in stalling what, as an abstract ideal, would seem to be an obviously good thing. The recent vote in Ireland against the admission of new members is only an explicit and crude expression of a more implicit and sophisticated policy pursued by most of the other members of the EU. There has not been enough vision or inspiration, either in the EU institutions or in the major west European states, to overcome their wholly natural, if narrowly-conceived, economic self-interest. But since western Europe has not filled the vacuum in central and eastern Europe with its economic organization, the EU, the United States can readily propose filling it with its military one, NATO.

The expansion of NATO to include the Baltic states, however, would bring this American military organization, indeed an implicit American Commonwealth of Nations, right up to the Russian border. Of course, this is not the first time that an American military alliance has immediately abutted a Russian border. NATO, with

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Poland, has bordered the Kaliningrad region of Russia since 1999; NATO, with Norway, has bordered the Kola Peninsula of Russia since 1949; and the United States itself has bordered eastern Siberia at the Bering Sea since it purchased Alaska in 1867. From the Russian perspective, however, the admission of the Baltic states into NATO would produce a quantum leap in the strategic significance of their vulnerable border regions, a few dozen miles from St. Petersburg, and with the three Baltic countries together located astride the military approaches to all of Russia lying between St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Some analysts have argued that there are better ways to provide for collective security in the Baltic region than by NATO expansion. One alternative would be to follow the example of Finland, a Baltic state that is a member of the EU but not a member of NATO. Finland is clearly in the Western sphere in regard to politics, economics and culture, even though it is practically in the Russian sphere, at least as a buffer state, in regard to security. Another alternative would be to admit Russia itself into NATO. This would redefine NATO from an American military alliance into a European collective security system. It would also dissolve the line dividing Russia from Europe.

There is much to be said in favor of each of these two (very different) alternatives to NATO enlargement.[6] Clearly the Russians prefer them, but many west Europeans may do so as well. Indeed, the admission of the Baltic states into NATO may eventually be blocked by one or more of its west European members. However, just as clearly, the Baltic states themselves much prefer NATO enlargement, as does the United States. From the Baltic perspective, only NATO membership will consolidate their hard-won national independence. From the U.S. perspective, only NATO enlargement will consolidate Europe into a secure core of the American way of globalization. This is why we can expect the United States to press forward with an enlargement of NATO that focuses upon the Baltic nations, which have progressed so far and so successfully along the American way.

A Tale of Three NATOs

ALMOST ALL discussions of NATO speak of it as a homogenous alliance with its different members integrated into the organization in similar ways. In reality, however, NATO has always included a wide variety of forms and degrees of integration. It would be useful, particularly in future negotiations with the Russians, to distinguish between three quite different NATOs, to be found respectively on the Central Front, the Northern Flank and the Southern Flank.

The Central Front: "High NATO." During the Cold War, the highest, fullest degree of integration of NATO was reached on the Central Front, especially in regard to West Germany but also at times with the Netherlands, Belgium, and Britain. High NATO was distinguished by three major features: (1) U.S. troops were permanently stationed on the member's territory; (2) U.S. nuclear weapons were positioned on the member's territory; and (3) the member possessed serious and substantial military forces, which were integrated with U.S. military forces in regard to strategy, planning and command. The ideal-type or model for NATO was West Germany. Given the central importance of West Germany and the Central Front during the Cold War, it was natural to think of this model when thinking of NATO. But even in regard to the Central Front, France provided an exception after

[6] I proposed the Finnish model in my "To Sing a Different Song: The Choices for the Baltic States", *The National Interest* (Summer 1999).

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1966, when President de Gaulle had France, including French forces in West Germany, withdraw from NATO as an organization, while remaining within the North Atlantic Treaty as an alliance.

The Northern Flank: "Low NATO." A very different NATO existed on the Northern Flank, particularly in regard to Denmark and Norway. Here, none of the three features of "high NATO" was present: (1) U.S. troops were never permanently stationed on Danish and Norwegian territory (although Greenland is an atypical exception in the former case, and U.S. troops did engage in periodic exercises in both countries); (2) U.S. nuclear weapons were never positioned in these countries, nor did U.S. naval ships carrying nuclear weapons normally visit their ports; and (3) the military forces of Denmark and Norway were hardly serious or substantial—in reality they were more like a national guard—and they were not integrated with U.S. forces in any operationally important way. For all practical purposes, the NATO of the Northern Flank was neither an integrated organization nor an alliance of equivalent powers; it was essentially a unilateral military guarantee given by the United States. Yet Norway actually bordered upon Soviet territory (for about 80 kilometers along the Kola Peninsula).

The Southern Flank: "Pseudo NATO." Yet another very different NATO existed on the Southern Flank, particularly in regard to Greece and Turkey. Here, each of the three features of high NATO was present but in a greatly reduced form: (1) U.S. air forces were permanently stationed on Greek and Turkish territory, but U.S. ground forces were not; (2) U.S. nuclear weapons were occasionally positioned in these countries, but they were rather peripheral to U.S. nuclear strategy (and even expendable, as was the case with the Jupiter missiles in Turkey on the occasion of the Cuban missile crisis); (3) the military forces of Greece and Turkey were large but not modern, and have always been more of a threat to each other than to the Russians; they could not be integrated with U.S. forces in any substantive way. For all practical purposes, the NATO of the Southern Flank was neither an integrated organization nor an alliance of equivalent powers; it was essentially a loose and sometimes fragile military coalition grouped around a leading power, the United States.

Even though no one today thinks in terms of the old Central, Northern and Southern fronts, these three versions of NATO during the Cold War can nevertheless help us in thinking about NATO enlargement in the contemporary era.

If there were a successor to the old Central Front in today's NATO, it would seem to be central Europe, especially the three new members—Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. But these countries have been integrated into NATO not like the "high NATO" of the old Central Front but instead like the "low NATO" of the Northern Flank: (1) no U.S. troops are stationed upon the territory of these three countries (or even on the territory of the old East Germany—the six eastern *Länder* of united Germany); (2) no U.S. nuclear weapons are positioned in these countries; and (3) despite (or because of) their Warsaw Pact past, the military forces of these three countries are not serious modern forces and have not been integrated with U.S. forces in any substantive way.

Of course, the United States could conceivably decide to transform one or more of these three features of "low NATO" into a feature of "high NATO." To do so, however, would entail breaking yet another agreement between the United States and the old Soviet Union: in this case, the agreement that led to the reunification of Germany. The United States would most likely undertake this transfor-

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mation only if there were a prior and comparable transformation in the Russian threat to these countries. It was such a transformation of the Soviet threat (evidenced by the outbreak of the Korean War) that led to the transformation of the original NATO of 1949 (merely a military alliance) into the NATO of 1951 (with all the features of "high NATO" on the Central Front). On the other hand, despite the ups and downs of the Soviet threat over the forty years from 1949 to 1989, the United States never seriously attempted to transform the Northern Flank from "low NATO" to "high NATO."

If NATO is expanded to include the Baltic states, this could be interpreted as an expansion of NATO's new Central Front; i.e., an extension of central Europe. The historical connections between Poland and Lithuania lend themselves to such an interpretation. However, the inclusion of the Baltic states could instead be interpreted as an expansion of NATO's old Northern Flank, i.e., an extension of northern Europe. The historical connections between Estonia and Latvia, on the one hand, and Finland and Sweden, on the other, lend themselves to such an interpretation. In either event, the expansion to the Baltic states could be merely the expansion of "low NATO." It might be that a version of "low NATO" could be made more acceptable to the Russians than the notion of NATO in general. They have already accepted a version of it on their border for many years.

The Strategic Anomaly of Kaliningrad

BEFORE 1945, what is now the Kaliningrad *oblast*, or province, of Russia was the northern half of East Prussia, a province of Germany. East Prussia was rich in its history (it had been a center first of the Teutonic knights and then of the Junker class), but poor in its economy (the Junkers' grain-producing estates could not compete in an unprotected market). The city of Kaliningrad itself was then Königsberg, known as the home of Immanuel Kant and also for its beautiful buildings and promenades. But between the two world wars, East Prussia was best known for being a strategic anomaly, separated from the rest of Germany by the famous Polish Corridor. As such, it was a perpetual irritant in Polish-German relations; along with the city of Danzig, the Polish Corridor provided the occasion for the beginning of the Second World War.

The Soviet Union conquered East Prussia in 1945, annexing the northern half while giving the southern half to Poland. Virtually every German living in the Soviet portion was either expelled or killed, and virtually every building in Königsberg was either destroyed or demolished. The Soviets renamed the city after Mikhail Kalinin, who served as the titular president of the Soviet Union for Stalin, and they rebuilt it as an especially ugly and dreary example of the typical Soviet style. They also made of the Kaliningrad region a vast military complex, which included the headquarters for the Soviet, and now the Russian, Baltic Fleet. Today, the province (whose population is about 900,000 and whose area is less than that of Connecticut) represents a miniature version of the worst aspects of contemporary Russia; its rates of narcotic abuse, infectious diseases (particularly AIDS), environmental pollution and criminal activity are among the highest in the Russian Federation. Kaliningrad's condition, and its contrast with the three Baltic states and with the old East Prussia, is a vivid reminder of what a mess Russians can make of a part of Europe when they are utterly free to be themselves.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kaliningrad province has been

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separated from the rest of Russia by the territory of independent Lithuania, by a sort of Lithuanian Corridor. Across this corridor there runs a military railroad line, which supplies Russian military forces in the territory. This strategic anomaly and dismal slum is a black hole that will be located right at the center of NATO's new military commitment to the Baltic states.

During the Cold War era, West Berlin was a Western island and strategic anomaly, which was surrounded by a Soviet sea. For many years, it was a crisis in waiting, and indeed it became an actual crisis in 1948–49 and again in 1958–61. If the Baltic states are admitted into NATO, Kaliningrad will become a Russian island and strategic anomaly surrounded by a NATO sea (along with the Baltic Sea itself). In its earlier incarnation during the interwar era as East Prussia, it was similarly a German island and strategic anomaly; it was also a crisis in waiting, and it became an actual crisis in 1939. Given these historical and geographical antecedents, it should not be surprising if, in what is supposed to be the new era of globalization, this obscure and backward place should also become a crisis in waiting, a real blast from the past.

Of course, the very vulnerability of Kaliningrad might make it into a hostage for Russian good behavior in international affairs, particularly their behavior in the Baltic region (rather like the vulnerability of West Berlin was a factor in restraining American behavior on occasion). On the other hand, the Russians already have in place a nuclear tripwire in Kaliningrad (dozens of nuclear weapons), which makes the territory more like a landmine than a hostage.

Since the time of Peter the Great, no European power has ever made a commitment to defend the Baltic countries from Russia. As different as they were from each other, Sweden, Prussia, France, Germany and Britain all concluded that the risks and costs of guaranteeing the independence of the Baltics from their massive Russian neighbor were beyond their interests and their capabilities. When the United States does make such a commitment to the Baltics, it will therefore be doing something that is not only unprecedented in American history (the closest prototype being the U.S. commitment to defend Norway and Denmark), but that is unprecedented in European history as well. It is also noteworthy that, as every serious military analyst believes, the United States can only credibly defend the Baltic states by featuring nuclear weapons as a means. It is thus odd that an administration sincerely determined to reduce the numbers and status of nuclear weapons worldwide would consider *raising* their significance in such a sensitive locale as the Baltics.

This historical leap by the United States to defend the Baltic republics rests upon the current American conviction that, for decades to come, America will remain as strong and as committed as it is today and that Russia will remain as weak and as feckless. However, the current balance (or imbalance) between American and Russian power would have been inconceivable only two decades ago. Will it still be conceivable only two decades from now?

Slovakia and Slovenia as Strategic Consolidation

THE admission of Slovakia into NATO would actually remove a strategic anomaly, one that was created with the admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. This left Slovakia as a geographical wedge inserted between the other three states. If Slovakia also joins, this wedge would be transformed into an integral component of a neat and compact bloc of four.

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The admission of Slovenia would remove yet another strategic anomaly. Of course, many Americans confuse Slovenia with Slovakia (the two countries not only have similar names but nearly identical flags), and many others think that Slovenia is in the Balkans (it is, however, geographically closer to the Alps and culturally closer to Austria). However, Slovenia has made more progress in establishing a liberal democracy, free markets and the rule of law than any other country being considered for NATO membership. Its admission would also provide a direct geographical connection and transit route between Italy (and NATO's southern region) and Hungary, which at present has no land frontier with any NATO country. Slovenia's admission would thus make NATO's central region even more coherent. (It would also mean that Switzerland and Austria, two non-NATO states, would be completely surrounded by NATO members.)

The Balkan States as "Pseudo NATO"

THE EXPANSION of NATO to include the Balkan states, even if only the relatively peaceful ones of Bulgaria and Romania, would not remove anomalies but multiply them. The Balkan region might become an American sphere of influence, but it would not be a real part of the American Commonwealth of Nations.

For most of the period since the middle of the 19th century, most of the Balkan countries have been ensconced within a Russian sphere of influence. This has been especially true of peoples that were both Orthodox in religion and Slavic by ethnicity (i.e., Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia), but Romania (Orthodox but not Slavic) often has been in the Russian sphere, as well. Of course, NATO has had an Orthodox member, Greece, since 1952, but Russia could always interpret Greece as an anomaly, more of a Mediterranean country than a Balkan one. The admission of Bulgaria and Romania (Macedonia, with its present difficulties, is not a serious candidate) into NATO would put a definitive end to any semblance of a Russian sphere in the Balkans. It would also put in place yet another enduring Russian grievance against the West.

Fifty years ago, the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO was supposed to contain the Soviet Union and to extend American influence into the Middle East. In practice, the most important consequence was to make the management of the perennial conflict between Greece and Turkey a perennial responsibility for NATO, and particularly for the United States. Similarly, the admission of the Balkan states into NATO might be justified as containing neighboring rogue states and, again, to extend American influence into the Middle East. In practice, the most important consequence will again be to make the management of the perennial conflicts between and within these states a perennial responsibility for NATO, and particularly for the United States.

The Balkan states have never achieved political stability in the same way as the other members of NATO, be they in western or central Europe. Indeed, they are hardly states at all in the European sense. They are the heirs to very different religious traditions (Eastern Orthodox or Islamic rather than Roman Catholic or Protestant) and to a very different imperial history (Ottoman rather than Habsburg), and their political cultures reflect both of these differences. If Greece and Turkey, taken together, have been difficult and troublesome members of NATO, Bulgaria and Romania could prove to be so as well.

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America in the Baltic States: Interests, Ideals and Identity

THE ISSUE of the next round of NATO enlargement and of concomitant American military commitments may not produce a new Great Debate in Washington, but it will represent a new chapter in an old and ongoing debate over American foreign policy. This is the perennial great debate that is variously defined as being between interests and ideals, between realism and idealism, or between conservatism and liberalism (now joined, perhaps, by neo-conservatism, as well). A conflict between these two perspectives can arise over each of the countries that is being considered for admissions into NATO, but it will be especially intense in regard to the Baltic states.[7]

From the realist (and conservative) perspective there are no U.S. national interests at stake in the Baltic states. These three small countries together add up to an area that is only 50 percent of Finland's (whose admission to NATO has never been seen as a U.S. national interest) and a population that is only 50 percent more. The United States has no significant strategic or economic interests in these countries, and certainly none that are anywhere near as weighty as the very substantial strategic risks and costs that would come with a U.S. military commitment to them. As Henry Kissinger, a realist advocate of the first round of NATO expansion, has put it: "[T]he border of Estonia is thirty miles from St. Petersburg. Advancing the NATO integrated command this close to key centers in Russia might mortgage the possibilities of relating Russia to the emerging world order as a constructive member."[8] Put more baldly, when the Baltic states are weighed in regard to U.S. interests and when NATO is defined as a military alliance, the proposal to admit them into NATO seems simply reckless and irresponsible.

Conversely, from the idealist (and both the liberal and the neo-conservative) perspective, there are fundamental American values at stake in the Baltic states. Over a period of more than seven centuries and in at least four successive incarnations, these countries have represented the easternmost extension of Western civilization. They have long seen themselves, and have been seen by other Europeans, as the "East of the West." (Just as, ever since they were acquired by Peter the Great, they have been seen by the Russians as their "window on the West", the "West of the East.") Today, ten years after their heroic restoration of their national independence, the Baltics have been extraordinarily successful in establishing and embodying the American values of liberal democracy, the free market and the rule of law. If any countries ever deserved to become members of NATO by virtue of their achievements by American standards, these do. It would be fitting indeed if, after one decade of national independence, they are welcomed into many decades of American protection. When the Baltic states are understood with regard to American values and when NATO is defined as a liberal-democratic and free-market community, the proposal to admit them into NATO seems to be one of those truths that we hold to be self-evident.

In reality, what is at stake in the Baltic states is not just American interests or American ideals. It is American identity, in particular the reinvention of American identity by American political, business and cultural elites to make it fit the new

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[7]See my "The Baltics: Between Russia and the West", *Current History* (October 1999).

[8]Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?: Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), p. 62.

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era of globalization. When America is by far the strongest power and the largest economy on the globe, these elites think that it no longer suffices for America to be located only on the North American continent and to be composed only of American citizens; that definition of America is obsolete. However, when America is far from being the only strong power and the only large economy, it is not yet possible for America to be located equally on every continent and to be composed equally of every people on the globe; that definition of America is premature. The definition of America that best fits the contemporary era—the era of globa*lization* as an ongoing project, rather than the merely international era of the past or the imagined fully global era of the future—is one that includes Europe, the continent that is most advanced along the American way, as part of the new and expanded American identity. When American business elites define America as the free market and the open society, and American cultural elites define America as liberal democracy and the rule of law, then they are drawn to define Europe as being, in all important respects, America.

IN THE 20th century, America met and won three great challenges presented by the old international era—the First World War, the Second World War and the Cold War. It did so because of its great military power and economic strength, to be sure, but more important were the sophistication and the determination with which these assets were deployed by successive generations of American statesmen. When either the sophistication or the determination lapsed, as with the Korean War and the Vietnam War, all of America's military and economic assets could not prevent a debacle or a defeat.

The extension of an American military commitment to the Baltic states, up to the very border of a sullen and resentful Russia that is armed with a sense of historical entitlement and 5,500 nuclear weapons, will present the United States with a strategic and diplomatic challenge of unprecedented complexity. At the same time, the integration of the Baltic states into the American commonwealth will represent the culmination of an American calling, of a 225-year project of spreading American values and re-creating Western civilization in the American image until it has at last reached its easternmost frontier, at the "East of the West." To bring both the challenge and the calling into a stable synthesis, to create a Baltic order distinguished by both peace and justice, will require of the American statesmen of the 21st century a level of sophistication and determination that would have amazed those of the 20th. □

Our people has now gained power over the whole world by defending its allies.

—from Cicero's dialogues

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Can European Democracy Survive Globalization?

Ralf Dahrendorf

DEMOCRACY today is under serious pressure, not least in Europe. The pressure, notably on representative or parliamentary democracy, is such that we will have to rethink the very constitution of liberty. This pressure comes moreover from two sides at the same time. Within countries, several developments conspire to set in motion a kind of creeping authoritarianism. These internal developments are reinforced by what is crudely called globalization, that is, the emigration of important decisions to spaces for which democratic processes and institutions do not exist.

Americans recognize some of these problems, but for a number of reasons the American position is different. Like Larry Siedentop in his influential book, *Democracy in Europe*, my concern focuses on the countries of Europe and with the European Union since 1989.[1] Many of us still remember with joy those months twelve years ago when country after country east of the crumbling Iron Curtain emerged from *nomenklatura* rule to the first halting steps toward democracy. As a Popperian I never subscribed to the view that threats to liberty were forever dispelled and that Hegel's (or Kojève's) final synthesis had arrived. At the same time I did not anticipate that within little more than a decade the risks to democracy would become so powerful.

This spring, two of the major countries of Europe, Italy and the United Kingdom, underwent—and survived—national election campaigns. In both cases, these campaigns were an expression of what might be called anti-politics. This was especially evident in Italy. The winning candidate used all his experience with—as well as ownership of—the media to project the image of a leader who is different: a star, a celebrity, an entrepreneur who knows what his customers want. It is also worth remembering what happened on the other side of the Italian political spectrum. A prime minister who by common consent did his job exceptionally well, Giuliano Amato, was considered insufficiently telegenic to lead the center-left into the election. Someone more attractive to

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[1] Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

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viewers was found in the person of Francesco Rutelli. In the event, Rutelli turned out to be a very serious candidate, but the reasons for his choice tell the relevant story.

Some would argue that something similar happened in Britain, because the "real" prime minister is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, whereas Tony Blair, who likes to surround himself with stars from anywhere but politics, is needed to get the votes. However that may be, Blair is a leader who likes to bypass political institutions like party and parliament and turn directly to the people, or, better still, to "focus groups" selected as representatives of the people.

Celebrity politics tends toward snapshot politics. Somehow, continuity has gone out of the democratic process. What counts is the view of the moment—and this is highly volatile. A week after the election, the voters are just as likely to turn against their choices. The chosen leader (if that is the word) for his part is happy to abandon his projects if what he regards as the people want something different. Throwaway politics is another notion that comes to mind: like tins of Coca-Cola, indeed like cameras and radio sets and soon mobile phones, policies are chosen, used and discarded for their short-term utility. What has gone out of our democracies is extended debate and the patient pursuit of objectives through periods of popular support as well as those of popular doubt.

Institutionally speaking, what has gone is the pivotal role of parliament. Mr. Blair's first act after his election in 1997 was to reduce "Prime Minister's Questions" in the House of Commons from two days to one—a symbolic yet significant act. Perhaps the British Parliament has always been more malleable than those of countries with a clearer separation of powers, but the tendency to strengthen the executive and weaken parliament is widespread. I am a member of a committee of the Upper House whose task it is to scrutinize bills in order to prevent government from using legislation to delegate powers to the executive. In recent years there has been a massive increase in such attempts. Elsewhere in Europe, and especially in the European Union, secondary legislation remains largely outside parliamentary control. Government by what we call "Henry VIII clauses"—that is, provisions in primary legislation that enable the executive to alter the very purpose of an act or even revoke it—is widespread.

There is also another side to the picture. While turnout in elections is still high in Europe, at least compared to the United States, observers nevertheless find widespread apathy, if not cynicism, with regard to politics. People do not care, and while they do not trust anyone in power, they cannot be bothered to do anything about it. This is how the authoritarian syndrome emerges. Contrary to totalitarianism, authoritarianism is founded not on the permanent mobilization of all subjects, but on their disinterest. People—citizens indeed!—can do what they want as long as they do not interfere with the smooth exercise of power. This power, in turn, is more and more concentrated in the executive.

Now, such creeping authoritarianism does not always prevail. In France there is a well-established tradition of 100,000 teachers or farmers or nurses descending on Paris and forcing the government to mend its ways. Last year, a number of European countries reacted to blockades by lorry drivers demanding lower taxes on petrol. But none of this is democracy as James Madison or John Stuart Mill envisaged it. "Strengthening Parliament", to quote the title of a recent report by British Conservatives, has become an uphill task.

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THIS IS all the more so in view of the other half of the somewhat somber picture before us—globalization. Democracy means three things: change is possible without violence; there are checks and balances to the exercise of power; the people have a decisive say in the process. Representative or parliamentary democracy links these elements through the election of representatives who in and through parliament can change policies and, if necessary, government, as well as scrutinize and control the exercise of power. Such institutions were historically developed in the nation-state, and, indeed, in many cases alongside the formation of nation-states. Both Madison and Mill (and many others) offered important reflections on the size and the nature—or rather, the culture—of the communities in which democratic institutions work; Madison speaks of a space in which there are "chords of allegiance", Mill of "nationality."

However we define or describe the traditional political space for democratic institutions, from a European perspective at least, it is rapidly losing relevance for important decisions. Whether and when interest rates are changed is decided by an unaccountable European Central Bank. Attack from the air on Kosovo is planned and initiated by NATO. Whether Russia receives further help from the international community, despite the halting repayment of its debt, is a matter for the International Monetary Fund. While in these cases one can at least point to institutions, other decisions of great significance issue from less defined agencies, as when a Japanese company decides to invest in Wales rather than in Normandy, or an American speculator grabs an auspicious moment to drive the pound sterling out of the European Monetary System and, by so doing, puts billions of dollars into his own accounts. Sometimes it is just wholly anonymous "markets" that seem to call the tune.

So what happens to democracy? Change without violence? This is hard to bring about if one does not even know who does what, when and how. It could be argued that all international agencies should apply an equivalent of the Twenty-second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and impose strict limits on the terms of office of their leaders. That might solve one problem. Checks and balances? This is arguably the area on which we should concentrate in years to come. There are ways of controlling the exercise of power in a globalized environment. In part they are judicial in the widest sense of the term, including regulators and arbitrators. In part, and at an earlier stage in the process, auditing international decision-makers is a prerequisite of control. Information technology helps bring to light relevant facts and figures. In some cases, national parliaments could gear themselves up to scrutinize international decisions without jeopardizing the advantages of global spaces in the process.

This is a list of items on the agenda for a democratic response to the emigration of decisions from traditional political spaces, but it fails to address the remaining and fundamental issue: How can the people have a say in processes for which there are no appropriate institutions? The large, and at times violent, demonstrations in Seattle and Washington and Prague and Genoa are clearly not the answer, though they do underline the question. They show that people want a say, that they resent the removal of important decisions from their grasp. This conclusion is derived not so much from the slogans of demonstrators convened over the Internet, but from the quiet support that they get from many who would not dream of setting cars on fire or smashing shop windows, though they enjoy reading the anti-capitalist dia-

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tribes of Viviane Forrester and others. As a result the "politics of cultural despair" is once again with us, and with it the political dangers that led Fritz Stern to write a book of this title about antimodernism in Imperial Germany.[2]

It is hard to escape the conclusion that democracy and the nation-state are tied to each other. The weakening of the nation-state by a process of internationalization is by the same token a weakening of democracy. So far we have not been able to apply the principles of democracy to political spaces beyond the nation-state. What, then, may be said about the European Union? Is it not an example, even a successful example, of democracy beyond the nation-state?

It is true that recent years have seen a shift in the arguments advanced for Europe to form an ever-closer union. Few now argue that the motive force should be to prevent war, or even to keep Germany under control. Some think that the main purpose of European integration today is to enable Europe to hold its own *vis-à-vis* the United States. At times, an anti-American sentiment creeps into such views, but it is animated more often by a belief that a "European model", notably of economic and social policy, is worth defending. Many of a more liberal persuasion, however, see the institutional Europe as a step toward coping with globalization by democratic means. If we cannot have global democracy just yet, we can at least begin the journey to that goal by creating a large world region, Europe, along democratic principles.

One may appreciate the intention, but it is far from the reality of the European Union. The Union has now laid down very serious tests of democratic virtue for so-called accession countries. If, however, it applied these tests to itself, the Union, the result would be dismal. It is not just a joke to say that if the EU itself applied for accession to the EU it could not be admitted because it is insufficiently democratic. The Union was, of course, set up as a Common Market, later extended by its greatest leader so far, Jacques Delors, into the Single Market. For this purpose the very French—indeed Cartesian—construction of its institutions may well have been appropriate. The right to propose rests with a Commission constructed to embody the common European interest; the right to dispose, to decide, remains with a Council of Ministers that assembles the various national interests. A Court of Justice makes sure that both institutions remain on the straight and narrow.

And democracy? I am convinced that the European Assembly (as it was then called) was an afterthought when the Treaty of Rome was drafted in 1956. It had no real function, and since that time has only gradually acquired further rights, though even now these do not include the right to determine its own seat, or to raise funds for its own budget, or indeed to pass legislation as the sovereign representation of the people of the Union. It is directly elected, but sovereignty remains elsewhere—in nation-states, in the executives, in elusive spaces beyond the grasp of the people.

In any case, what people are we talking about? There is now a lively debate on such issues among both speech-making politicians and puzzled academics. But the key is this: There is no such thing as a European *demos* on which to build a European democracy. Public opinion, even published opinion, is fragmented into national segments at best (and often into regional enclaves within the countries). European elections leave most voters uninterested; turnout in many countries is below 50 percent. Those who do

[2]Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1961).

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vote in fact vote on national issues, notably on the popularity of their own government at the time. The resulting parliamentary assembly is similarly fragmented. More than fifty of its members never turn up. Those who do are frequently people who failed to get into national parliaments, or have retired from more important national positions.

As a result, the decision-making process of the European Union is an insult to democracy. This is all the more important at a time when the Union is trying to venture out of the constraints of the Single Market into all kinds of new areas, notably in foreign and security policy and in the justice and home affairs field. (At the same time, it is useful to remember that, in budgetary terms, "Europe" remains a rather minor power, disposing as it does of less than 1.2 percent of the GDP of countries which themselves give their parliaments and governments control over 40 percent and more of their GDP.) It would be possible, and perhaps rewarding, to look in more detail at the decision-making processes of the European Union, but such a closer look would not dispel the conclusion that Europe's institutions fail the democracy test. Far from being a successful step in the direction of applying democracy beyond the nation-state, Europe proves that this is all but impossible to achieve.

HAVING SPREAD almost unmitigated gloom on the subject, it is time to look for encouragement. This is not so simple, but one can point to three sets of ideas, of hints, about the future of democracy from a European perspective.

First, it is important to remember that the nation-state is still the single most important political space at the beginning of the 21st century. It may have lost some of its strength, but it remains the relevant inclusive community for most people. For those who have just escaped from imperial domination, like the formerly Soviet-ruled countries of central and eastern Europe, the nation-state embodies not just sovereignty, but freedom. Everywhere in Europe, key social policies are decided by national parliaments. The varieties of economic and political culture bear witness to the strength of nation-states.

This means that parliamentary democracy is not a spent force. It has to be, and it can be, defended against all pressures. Within countries, the main danger today is, on the one hand, the creeping authoritarianism noted above, and, on the other, a new regionalism. While this regionalism often appears in the name of self-determination, it is a very dubious contribution to democracy. Beyond countries, another dubious trend must be resisted: the use of "globalization" as a pretext for decisions that have nothing to do with such trends. Rural post offices do not have to be closed for reasons of globalization. Thus there are plenty of themes for the vigorous defense of parliaments and representative democracy generally.

Secondly, as we move beyond the nation-state, we must beware the pretense of democracy when, in truth, the voice of the people does not reach decision-makers in any regular and constitutional way. It is quite likely that this central feature of true democracy will for some time be lacking in international political spaces all the way from the European Union through NATO to the UN and its agencies, including as well the IMF, the WTO and the World Bank. This means that, for the time being, we have to concentrate on setting up effective and transparent checks and balances. There are many ways of going about this task. I have alluded to the Twenty-second Amendment, and also to judicial and auditing institutions. Publicity itself is an instrument of controlling those in power.

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This still leaves the third and most difficult task unresolved, which is giving people a voice in matters that are decided beyond the nation-state. Unfortunately, this will have to remain unresolved. For some time to come, we shall live with a confused and rather uncomfortable mix of highly imperfect attempts to democratize global decision-making. One may with good reason speak unkindly of the European Parliament but, of course, it documents at least good intentions, as do the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the North Atlantic Assembly, and other similar institutions. There is also the array of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). At times they aspire to be more governmental than is good for them; at other times, they are more anti-governmental than is good for the rest of us. But in their chaotic way, they express the views of many people. The same is true in an even more diffuse fashion for the "Internet debates" that are going on everywhere. And soon we are back to Seattle and all that—inchoate expressions of frustration by people who have a right to be heard, but cannot find a way to give voice to their views. For the moment, there is no way to give true democratic shape to this cacophony.

Except for one final point, perhaps. Germany's Weimar Republic has been well described as a democracy without democrats. This was one of the reasons why Weimar democracy could not last. However, the opposite condition offers more hope. If we cannot have world or even European democracy, at least we can have democrats: people who are conscious of their rights as citizens, and take seriously the responsibility actively to defend them. Citizens do not just let things happen. They speak up, and even if they are not always heard, their voices still matter. They use all non-violent means to check the untrammeled exercise of power. They support visible initiatives, such as the counter-World Forum at Porto Alegre earlier this year. They form an invisible network of defenders of freedom that, in principle, spreads all over the world. Democrats without democracy offer a more hopeful prospect than the reverse. Perhaps this was the secret of postwar Germany: there were democrats, like Gerd Bucerius, who were prepared to practice what they believed, and thus created a working democracy.[3] For all we know, something of this kind may one day be achieved beyond the nation-state. □

[3]Gerd Bucerius was the founder of *Die Zeit* and a Christian-Democratic member of the first Bundestag. See my *Liberal und unabhängig: Gerd Bucerius und seine Zeit* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2000).

> Democrats with shortcomings are far better than authoritarians with saving graces.
>
> —William Safire

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E Pluribus Confusio

Living with the EU's Structural Incoherence

John Van Oudenaren

PRESIDENT BUSH's recent journeys to Europe were bittersweet reminders, if any were needed, of the continued centrality of transatlantic relations for U.S. interests. Even as the new administration grapples with the shift of world economic and political weight to Asia and turns its attention to issues such as trade in the Americas or the problems of Africa, cooperation with Europe remains the cornerstone of U.S. international engagement. Nowhere is the United States enmeshed in a thicker web of institutional and cultural ties than it is in continental Europe and the British isles. Whether one speaks of economic stakes, scientific and technological cooperation, or the bonds of common history and philosophies of government, it is clear that nothing can diminish Atlantic relations to a second order concern. In a practical vein, too, it is difficult to see how the United States can accomplish any of its international goals—even in Asia—in the absence of cooperative relations with Europe.

At the same time, however, reactions to Bush by European leaders, the press and the general public confirm the degree to which Europe, freed of its Cold War dependence on Washington, feels that it can and must assert itself in relations with the United States. "Superpower"—a term rarely used in this context even two years ago—has become commonplace in discussions of the European Union's economic and political (if not military) ambitions *vis-à-vis* Washington. While political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic affirm the continued importance of NATO, the Europeans clearly attach greater long-term significance to the EU, and they suspect Washington of trying to use the alliance and its enlargement to bolster American influence on the continent and undercut the relative importance of the Union.

A central challenge for the United States in coming years will be to preserve the existing network of transatlantic economic, political, security and institutional ties even as it adjusts to an enlarged and more assertive EU. Among other tasks, this will require managing a complex U.S.-EU economic relationship in which the sheer weight of cooperative links across the Atlantic intersects with differing visions of capitalism and approaches to globalization.

Less well recognized, it will also require U.S. policymakers to deal with the often jarring contrast between the EU's assertive external posture and its per-

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sistent internal divisions. Such divisions are apparent in the intensifying debate among European politicians about the "finality" of the integration process, in the Irish electorate's rejection of the Treaty of Nice, and indeed in the violent anti-EU demonstrations that increasingly mar the very summits at which European leaders seek to affirm the continent's unity and resolve toward the rest of the world. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the future of U.S.-EU relations depends more on the vicissitudes of Europe's internal dilemmas than on anything else.

Europe's Internal Dilemmas

IN THE FIFTY years since Jean Monnet began the process leading to today's EU, Europe generally has avoided divisive debate over the finality of the integration project. The operating principle has been to sidestep discussion of ultimate goals and to place trust in process—in building "an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe." For the most part, however, European leaders shared certain key assumptions. Although the 1957 Treaty of Rome specified that all European countries were eligible for membership, the division of Europe set geographic limits to expansion. The same division meant that NATO would remain the preeminent security organization in Western Europe. There was also general agreement about the path that Europe would take toward union. Although Monnet overestimated the readiness of national governments to cede powers to Brussels, there was broad support for his "Community method" in which powers would be transferred gradually to Brussels. With the passing of the Gaullist challenge under Mitterrand, only the recalcitrant British and the obstinate Danes seemed to oppose as a matter of principle the creation of a federal Europe.

Today, all of these assumptions are invalid. Geographic limits to expansion have all but disappeared. Thirteen countries are formal candidates for membership, a number that is certain to grow if Croatia, Serbia and other Balkan states complete their transitions to democracy. Other countries that have been mentioned as potential candidates include Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and even Israel.[1]

Second, the role of NATO has been transformed. While Europeans continue to emphasize NATO's enduring role in collective defense, the Cold War context that made NATO a vital part of European integration is gone. The alliance can be expanded and modernized as it has been in recent years, but it never again can be the institutional embodiment of a benign American presence watching over the building of a civilian Europe.

Finally, there is no longer basic agreement about the road to "closer union." For the last fifteen years, Europe has been engaged in an almost constant process of institutional debate and reform—one that is set to continue as the member states ratify the Treaty of Nice (a process complicated by the vote in Ireland) and prepare for an intergovernmental conference in 2004 that is supposed to establish a delineation of Union, national and regional powers. Federalists such as Commission President Romano Prodi continue to call for strengthening the EU's central institutions and eliminating the national veto. But the member states, not least France, have largely rejected this approach. They are looking to arrangements that deliver the benefits of integration, including greater global influence, while preserving the nation-state and its autonomy.

The reassertion of member-state autonomy in an enlarging Union is likely

[1]Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Living With a New Europe", *The National Interest* (Summer 2000).

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to mean the persistence of two deep-seated structural factors that characterize the present EU: an extremely uneven political and legal order that complicates decision-making; and a systemic weakness in turning agreed Union decisions into concrete policies that are effective in the member-states.

The distinguishing feature of integration as envisioned by Monnet was simplicity. The hallmark of today's EU is complexity. Different decision-making processes are used for trade, monetary affairs, defense, immigration and other policy areas. Differentiation among member states, initially introduced to circumvent British obstructionism, has become a permanent feature of the constitutional order. Twelve member states have adopted the euro, three have not. Twelve EU countries participate in the Schengen immigration arrangements (along with two non-members), three EU members do not. Eleven EU countries are members of NATO, four are not. Constant tinkering with the EU institutional order, such as occurred with the Maastricht, Amsterdam, and Nice treaties, has expanded the scope of EU policy responsibilities without resolving such fundamental questions as the sources of EU law or nature of the relationship between the Union and the citizen.

Moreover, even in those policy areas in which the EU *is* able to take clear-cut decisions, it has had increasing difficulty in ensuring that those decisions are implemented, consistently and evenly, with respect to the citizens (consumers, businessmen, taxpayers) that European integration purports to serve. EU legislation generally is passed in the form of directives addressed to the member states, which then are required to transpose these directives into national law. If a member fails to transpose a directive, does so improperly, or neglects to enforce EU-mandated national law, the Commission is supposed to begin an enforcement process that can culminate in a case being brought to the Court of Justice and the imposition of fines. In many cases this multi-stage process does not work, as can be seen in reports about lags in the completion of the single market, illegal state aid to industry, and continued segmentation of national markets. The Commission lacks the resources to monitor enforcement of EU law and is in any case often intimidated from doing so by powerful member-state interests.

In some cases, difficulties with implementing EU law arise because member states lack the administrative capacity and bureaucratic traditions needed to enforce the thousands of pages of regulations in the Union's *acquis communautaire*. (Indeed, traditionally Euroskeptic countries such as Britain and Denmark resist expanding EU involvement in new policy areas not only out of abstract concern for national sovereignty, but also because they know that EU regulations are enforced unevenly across the Union and fear that regulations may in practice apply more stringently to their own firms than to those of competitors.) In other cases, implementation problems are the result of outright defiance of EU authority by national governments and parliaments, usually in deference to domestic political pressures. This has been the case, for example, with nationally-legislated bans on genetically-modified organisms that fragment the EU's single market and with national attempts to block takeovers of domestic firms by investors from other EU countries.

The EU's problems both with decision-making and implementation are almost certain to get worse with enlargement. The Treaty of Nice sets out new procedures for taking decisions in a Union of 27 or more member states, but there is little reason for confidence that these complex reforms will succeed. With

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regard to implementation, new member states will be granted long transition periods that will exacerbate the complexity of the legal order. They will have weak administrative mechanisms, while the sheer size of the enlargement will strain already inadequate Commission resources dedicated to enforcement.

None of this is to suggest that the EU is about to collapse or that it has stopped moving forward. Its ability to progress on an agenda that includes monetary union, enlargement, building the rapid response force, and economic reform that finally is producing respectable growth is rather impressive. This *is* to suggest that the finality debate will not produce finality. The EU will continue to evolve into an increasingly complex hybrid of dispersed and centralized powers—"a superpower but not a superstate", as Tony Blair phrased it in his October 2000 Warsaw speech—that will present an array of challenges for U.S. policy.

The External Dimension

IN VIEWING the EU's constitutional travails, some U.S. commentators have expressed satisfaction with current trends and specifically with the apparent ascendancy of "widening" over "deepening." Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, suggests that enlargement on the scale being contemplated will result in a Europe that is "geographically and culturally whole, but almost certainly politically diluted."[2] The accession of many new members is likely to block any serious move toward genuine or deep political integration, frustrating attempts to acquire an autonomous military capability and leaving the United States through NATO the arbiter of developments on the continent.

This is much too sanguine a view. An EU that is engaged in perpetual constitutional reform and an open-ended process of enlargement will constitute a threat to an effectively managed international system able to cope with the strains of globalization. Anything that the United States might gain from a politically divided, NATO-compliant Europe will be more than lost in political ill will generated by endless squabbles over trade and other economic issues. A more likely outcome of current trends is the emergence of an enormous trade and regulatory bloc, increasingly able to influence the world economy, but lacking the requisite political cohesion either to provide a level economic playing field inside the Union or to deal with security threats in Europe's near abroad (or in what could become unstable regions *internal* to the Union). This is not a recipe for a Europe "whole and free." It is a formula for intra-alliance trade wars, and for continued security dependence in an increasingly fractious economic and political environment.

Many of the escalating trade disputes between the United States and the EU already reflect the externalization of the uneven decision-making and enforcement situation within the Union. The banana import and beef hormone cases demonstrate the difficulty the EU has in bringing its trade and regulatory legislation into compliance with WTO rulings. The United States and the EU finally managed to resolve the banana dispute in early 2001, but only after a nine-year period in which a coalition of member states blocked Commission efforts to establish a WTO-compliant import regime. In the case of beef, the EU has not even tried to meet WTO objections; instead it has offered compensation in the form of allowing the United States to impose tariffs on unrelated products.

It is an open question as to whether a liberal international trading order and a solid transatlantic political relationship

[2]Brzezinski, "Living With a New Europe", p. 28.

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can survive the growing stresses of the EU's internal incoherence. It is worth recalling that the celebrated vandalizing of a local McDonald's by French farmer José Bové was prompted by the imposition by the United States—in response to the beef hormone exclusion—of WTO-sanctioned tariffs on Roquefort cheese made from the milk of the sheep raised on Bové's farm. Bové's trial provoked a wave of anti-U.S. and anti-globalization protest in France. Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress, irritated by EU failure to comply with adverse WTO rulings, sought to increase the price of noncompliance by legislating so-called carousel retaliation, which in turn threatened to give rise to further action in the WTO, this time by the EU. Lost in the trading of trade-war blows was the fact that the entire cycle of retaliation and counter-retaliation would never have begun in the first place had the EU been able to comply with its own commitments.

Several aspects of the EU's international behavior that grow out of its complex internal situation should concern U.S. policymakers. Five are especially noteworthy.

First, as in the example just cited, is the EU's difficulty in applying internally its international trade obligations. This casts the United States in the position of trade bully *vis-à-vis* European publics, without resulting in any market openings that benefit producers.

Second is the EU's increasingly political approach to regulation. Nowhere is the EU's implementation deficit more apparent than in the field of regulation, where the Union and its member states have managed to achieve the worst of all possible worlds: disputes with trading partners who suspect the EU of using regulatory barriers as a disguised form of protectionism, widespread public scorn over the Commission's perceived bureaucratic preoccupation with setting standards on trivial matters, and a failure to protect the public from genuine dangers such as "mad cow" disease and threats to the blood supply. EU agencies for the environment, medicinal products and other areas have been established, but the member states have not been prepared to cede them genuine rule-making and enforcement powers of the type that federal agencies exercise in the United States. The result is a regulatory process that is easily politicized and that lacks credibility both with its purported beneficiaries at home and with trading partners abroad.

Europe's trading partners are especially wary of the "precautionary principle", under which the EU claims the right to ban the import of products when there is uncertainty or the possibility of a health or environmental hazard. WTO rules allow countries to block the import of hazardous products, but only on the basis of sound scientific evidence. The United States and other countries are concerned that the EU's use of precautionary standards will make their exports vulnerable to decisions taken on ostensible grounds of health and safety, but in fact made in response to political pressures, artificially fanned by economic interests that stand to gain from precautionary bans.

An additional exemplary domain concerns anti-trust regulation. Anti-trust is an area in which the Commission enjoys strong powers relative to the member states, but here as well the EU has failed to establish the arm's length relationship between politics and regulation needed to inspire international confidence. While U.S. and EU regulators have tended to see eye-to-eye on most large mergers, anti-trust has been an accident waiting to happen in transatlantic relations. It was only a matter of time before the Commission made a decision involving U.S. firms that would be perceived in Washington as commercially motivated, provoking a serious transatlantic contro-

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versy. Indeed, that decision seems to have come with the Commission's blockage of the GE-Honeywell merger previously approved by U.S. and Canadian authorities.

A third area of concern is the growing involvement of the European Parliament in trade issues and in regulatory issues with effects on trade. The Parliament was the driving force behind the ban on aircraft engine hush kits to meet noise standards imposed by the EU outside the International Civil Aviation Organization, the forum in which international standards on aircraft noise are negotiated. This action, had it been taken by the U.S. Congress, would have caused howls of protest about American unilateralism. The European Parliament has also taken hard-line positions on data protection issues that affect U.S. firms as well as on broadcast and motion picture quotas. It has seized upon the presence of U.S. listening posts in Europe as evidence of commercial espionage intended to damage the interests of European firms. And it sought to amend (and ultimately blocked) the Commission's proposed takeover directive to make unsolicited takeovers more difficult for U.S. firms.

Up to a point, these actions reflect the understandable response of elected politicians to concerns raised by globalization. But they are also an outgrowth of the EU's convoluted internal situation. Engaged in a permanent campaign to enhance its powers relative to the Commission and the member state governments, the Parliament tends to subordinate policy considerations to this institutional objective. To the extent that anti-Americanism in the name of environmentalism, food safety and other concerns has become fashionable in Europe, the Parliament reflects this trend.

A fourth area in which the EU's internal complexities spill over into the international arena concerns the aggressive approach the Commission has taken in the WTO toward other countries. The Commission has exhibited a marked intolerance for shortcomings in other countries that, while surely not desirable, can be shown to have little real effect on EU trade—an intolerance that sits oddly with the Commission's inability to tackle barriers inside the Union. While "beef and bananas" has become a kind of shorthand for transatlantic trade tensions, these cases—market access complaints that the United States has filed against the EU—are probably less important for the future of the international trading order than the growing list of suits that Brussels has brought against the United States.

In 1997, for example, the EU initiated a case against the U.S. Anti-Dumping Act of 1916, claiming that a provision that allowed for private lawsuits for treble damages and criminal penalties against importers of products sold at below market value contravened international trade agreements. The United States argued that the law was susceptible to interpretation that would permit compliance with WTO obligations. It pointed out that there had never been a successful criminal prosecution under the act, and that no complainant in a civil suit had ever recovered damages. The WTO panel rejected these arguments and the EU, which claimed that threats of adverse decisions under the act cast a cloud over the business plans of European steel exporters, prevailed in the case.

The EU also requested WTO dispute settlement consultations regarding a Massachusetts law curtailing procurement from companies doing business in Burma—an action that proved superfluous, for the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the law. The Court also struck down a Harbor Maintenance Fee that the EU claimed, in a WTO action, violated U.S. undertakings under the 1994 GATT agreement. In yet another case a WTO

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panel upheld the U.S. contention that Sections 301–310 of the Trade Act of 1974 were consistent with WTO rules. As in the 1916 case, the EU had argued that the mere existence of these provisions, rather than any specific U.S. action affecting EU interests, was a violation.

In what so far is the most significant dispute with the United States, in 1998 the EU launched a case against the U.S. Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) regime, which it charged constituted a violation of the WTO subsidy agreement by providing tax breaks for export-derived income. The United States argued that the EU's action contravened a 1981 understanding that permitted FSCs as a way of counterbalancing favorable tax treatment granted to exporters by EU member states. The EU prevailed in the panel and the appeals process, prompting the Clinton Administration and the Congress to amend the offending legislation. The EU subsequently launched a new challenge to the amended law and has asked for authorization to impose sanctions on more than $4 billion worth of U.S. exports if the WTO upholds the EU complaint.

What is striking about these complaints is that, unlike beef and bananas, they are not for the most part about particular products sold by identifiable firms. In most of them, the EU has alleged little actual harm to European producers. Rather, they reflect an effort by the Commission, backed with varying degrees of enthusiasm by the member states, to use the WTO dispute resolution mechanism to place the United States on the defensive and to gain leverage in more substantive cases that the EU has lost. They reflect the complex and politicized internal situation in the Union, as the member states, industrial lobbying groups, and individual firms pressure the Commission to lash out against external trading partners and to win back in the dispute resolution process protections that the EU has given up in trade negotiations. Legally and technically some of the EU cases have merit—a fact that has been acknowledged in U.S. efforts to comply with adverse rulings and in Executive Branch efforts to blunt the implementation of U.S. laws that may be problematic from a WTO perspective. Politically, however, the wisdom of this wide-ranging assault on large swaths of U.S. law is questionable—especially in view of the EU's large trade surpluses with the United States, its own failure to comply with WTO rulings, and the spotty record it brings to market enforcement within the Union.

A fifth and final aspect of EU behavior that should be of particular concern to U.S. officials is the emerging European posture on globalization. Following the Seattle debacle, the Commission and key member states have called upon the Union to assume a larger role in "managing globalization." As they seek to sustain European integration in the face of increased popular skepticism, European leaders are presenting the EU as the optimum level to which citizens should look in responding to the challenges of globalization. Explicitly or implicitly, part of the message is that resisting or shaping globalization is a task to be undertaken in opposition to the United States. While few European leaders fall prey to crude anti-Americanism, their statements reflect a growing temptation to channel anti-globalization sentiment against the United States. The tone is generally one of regret that, in a globalized world, America alone is too big and too undisciplined to play by the rules that everyone else recognizes must be observed. Meanwhile, Europe itself is well on its way toward becoming a persistent violator of those very rules, albeit in the name of such high-sounding principles as precaution (food safety), multifunctionality (agriculture) and diversity (culture).

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There are, to be sure, countervailing forces that are working to buffer these problems. Governments on both sides of the Atlantic are committed in principle to open trade. The United States Trade Representative and the Commission have pledged to work to resolve disputes, and the two principals involved, Robert Zoellick and Pascal Lamy, are said to enjoy a cordial personal and working relationship. Non-governmental mechanisms, such as the Transatlantic Business Dialogue and exchanges of legislators, can help to work through problems. To the extent that standards can be harmonized bilaterally or in bodies such as the OECD, regulatory clashes can be avoided. And globalization presents opportunities for U.S.-EU cooperation as well as temptations to political grandstanding. On balance, however, guarded pessimism seems in order when it comes to assessing prospects for U.S.-EU trade relations. Except under the most hopeful of scenarios, the EU will be too big, too complex, and too conflicted by soaring ambitions and crippling uncertainties to be other than a difficult partner for the international community.

IN CHARACTERIZING the EU as a superpower but not a superstate, Tony Blair was appealing to audiences in Britain by assuring them that they could have the best of both worlds—retain their sovereignty *and* enjoy the advantages of being part of a large and dynamic Union—even as he sought to convince continental politicians of Britain's commitment to Europe and its suitability for a leadership role. For all its studied ambiguities and limited, pragmatic purposes, however, Blair's phrase captured an important truth about the Union. In trade, anti-trust, and foreign aid it already acts like a superpower, a role that it is working to extend to monetary affairs, technology and other areas. Internally, however, it lacks the strong central executive and the uniformity with respect to policy and law that characterize a nation-state.

For the United States and other countries, deciding how to respond to the emergence of a political, economic and security entity that exerts enormous *external* power but that is not organized like a traditional nation-state will be a major challenge. In Washington, the question of how to relate to the Union inevitably will be debated in the context of U.S. support for European integration stretching back to the Truman Administration. Although such support undoubtedly has existed, it is important to stress that the United States was never an uncritical backer of European integration. It came out of World War II committed to a "universalist" approach to building a new international order, one that rejected the special economic zones associated with Imperial Preference and fascist autarky. Universalism was embodied in the commitment to the most favored nation principle in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and to universal currency convertibility in the Bretton Woods system. It was only when universalism failed to work in reviving Europe's economy, raising the specter of communist takeovers, that the United States abandoned the universalist approach and began to work with Europe on region-specific responses to the crisis of that day.

The key point is that the United States was always attentive to the *content* of European regional integration and how it related to U.S. interests in the global system. When told about Robert Schuman's plan for a coal and steel community, Dean Acheson was alarmed at what he feared was a cover for "a gigantic European cartel." Only after these concerns were mitigated did the United States mobilize support for the communi-

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ty and the GATT waiver that it required. Washington later backed the creation of the Common Market, but it never endorsed the extension of trade privileges to overseas colonies and territories. What the United States did not want were amorphous economic and political arrangements that would set up difficult-to-combat economic barriers against outsiders, without creating the core political strengths that Washington desired out of European integration.

The European order that is emerging today—one that the United States has been actively promoting—is in some respects the antithesis of the one that Acheson and his successors worked to foster. With open-ended enlargement, an increasingly differentiated and uneven internal decision-making system, and a network of preferential trade and political relationships that extends in all directions, the EU is a far cry from the geographically and functionally well-defined entity of the 1950s and 1960s. It is, as David Calleo and others have noted, a hybrid confederal model that will take many years to work out its internal constitutional dilemmas, and that is itself at risk of becoming overextended to the point of total ineffectiveness.[3]

Beyond how enlargement affects the internal functioning of the Union, sheer size will at some point start to impinge on the global system to the detriment of U.S. interests. In the 1950s the United States sought to ensure that any regional group in Europe fit into a broader global system governed by the GATT. Today one can hardly speak of the EU as "fitting into" the WTO. It is, along with the United States, the co-creator of that system and one of its major arbiters. With further expansion of EU trade authority—through enlargement and conclusion of special trade arrangements with other countries—there is a sense in which the EU all but becomes the international trading system, leaving the United States the odd country out.

European Union officials already boast that in the next decade or so "a free trade area with the EU at its center will be created comprising one billion people."[4] They are quick to add that American businesses will make the most of any new opportunities offered. While this may be true, the United States will reap such benefits only at the sufferance of Brussels, rather than from a position of strength. U.S.-based producers (as opposed to investors) may be especially disadvantaged. The Business Roundtable reports that already some 33 percent of total world exports in 1999 were covered by European free trade and customs union agreements—a number that is certain to grow as the Union completes its network of preferential agreements in the Mediterranean basin, the former Soviet Union and further afield.[5]

These trends raise questions about the kind of EU that is in the interests of the United States and about the U.S. stake in Europe's debate on finality. To the extent that Washington has any influence, U.S. policymakers may be tempted to press for a looser, more intergovernmental Europe with an array of overlapping institutions, rather than a tightly integrated, EU-dominated Europe. Such a Europe might have particular advantages for the United States in the security field. It would facilitate the continuation of special U.S. relationships with countries such

[3]Calleo, "A Choice of Europes", *The National Interest* (Spring 2001), esp. pp. 7–9.

[4]Ambassador Guenter Burghardt, Head of the European Commission Delegation to the United States, speech at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, January 23, 2001.

[5]Business Roundtable, *The Case for U.S. Trade Leadership: The United States is Falling Behind* (Washington: BRT, 2001), p. 5.

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as Britain, help to sustain more of NATO's traditional role, and facilitate faster crisis decision-making.

When it comes to day-to-day policy issues, however, especially the trade and regulatory matters that so bedevil U.S.-European relations, it is not clear that a weaker and more decentralized EU serves U.S. interests. On issues such as telecommunications deregulation, agricultural reform, and subsidies to industry, Brussels has been a liberalizing force arrayed against entrenched political and corporate interests at the national level. While the Commission and the Court of Justice are vulnerable to political pressures, in principle they offer equality of treatment under EU law to U.S. firms. In contrast, in areas where the EU operates on the basis of negotiated deals among the member states (including, increasingly, arms procurement), there is less transparency, little recourse to the courts, and less to stop national governments from externalizing the costs of reaching intra-EU compromises by striking deals at the expense of non-member countries. To the extent that trade and other economic issues come to be decided on this basis, the United States will have little recourse but to seek redress for damages at the international level, in the already overburdened WTO dispute resolution process.

The European Commission, which often is regarded as the nascent federal government of a united Europe, is in its present form not suited to playing the role of an "honest centralizer." It lacks democratic legitimacy and has itself been politicized as it strives to maintain its position in a Union of more assertive member states. The same is true of the Court of Justice, which many argue has allowed concern over institutional survival to trump the law when it comes to standing up to pressures from national capitals. Centralization without reform is not in the interests of the United States any more than it is in that of Europe itself. Over the longer term, however, the United States and other countries that must live with the consequences of EU decisions share an interest in the emergence of a more uniform, predictable and law-based internal EU order with stronger and more transparent regulatory structures.

In such an order, the Commission (or whatever Union-level executive may emerge) would not need to prove its worth by aggressive Euro-nationalist stances against the United States on trade and globalization issues. The European Parliament, while still subject to the political forces that move domestic legislatures, could concentrate on good governance rather than on bolstering its position in the fractious EU system. And Europe might not need the multiple and excessive representations that it currently enjoys in the G-7, the UN Security Council, and other bodies. Only such a Europe will be able to play the partnership role that proponents of a strong U.S.-EU relationship welcome but that the EU, in its current incarnation, is largely incapable of fulfilling.

Implications for Policy

IN ADDRESSING the question of what kind of Europe serves U.S. interests, Washington first needs to recognize the limits of its influence. With regard to widening, it should continue to support EU membership for the candidate countries negotiating accession. But whether it should support virtually open-ended EU enlargement is another matter. Getting out in front of the Europeans by championing membership for Russia, as President Clinton did in his June 2000 speech at Aachen, is clearly a mistake. It is simply not in the U.S. interest to promote the creation of a single trading block with 700 million people

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stretching from Guadeloupe to the Aleutian Islands.

The United States also needs to avoid having its relations with important countries on the periphery of Europe—Turkey, Russia and Ukraine—become little more than a function of its policies toward the EU. While lending support to Turkey's EU bid, the United States should maintain a strong political, economic and strategic bilateral relationship with Ankara. Turkey's outrage in the 1990s at being excluded from the EU candidate list was the result not just of exclusion as such, but of Cyprus' inclusion on this list—which the EU blundered into through a combination of wishful thinking and political maneuvering among the member states. One lesson to draw is that damage from poorly thought-out pledges to enlarge is not necessarily repaired by equally murky plans for still more enlargement.

As for Russia, the United States must avoid a situation in which its relationship with Moscow runs through Brussels. In the second half of the 1990s U.S.-Russian relations were thoroughly "Europeanized" as Washington emphasized NATO-Russia and Russian-EU ties in hope of defusing resistance to NATO expansion and policy in the Balkans—a trend that reached its high point with Clinton's call for Russian admission to the EU. The United States and Russia (along with Canada) are the only large economies in the Euro-Atlantic area that are not striving to join the EU. While the United States has an interest in promoting good relations between Russia and the EU, it also has a stake in encouraging Russia to look critically at those aspects of EU enlargement that negatively affect Russia's interests. In some cases—deflection of Russian steel and nuclear exports to the U.S. market, combating persistent EU efforts to ban the use of traditional expressions (burgundy, champagne, port, sherry and so forth) by all but European producers, and resisting EU pressure to apply foreign content norms to Russian broadcasting—U.S. and Russian interests directly coincide.

Anything that Washington can do to promote reform in and bolster Ukraine against a possibly resurgent Russia is important. While it should work with Europe on policy toward Ukraine, it cannot assume that the EU will "save" Ukraine for the West, either by deliberate acts of policy or by the mere stabilizing force of its existence. While U.S. experts are attracted to the idea of Poland as a bridge between Ukraine and the West, the United States needs to do more than replicate in slightly different form programs funded by the EU to stabilize its future eastern border. Washington should concentrate exchange, aid and trade efforts on Kiev and central and eastern Ukraine—regions and cities where conditions may be more difficult than along the Polish border but where Ukraine's ultimate fate will be decided.

U.S. influence over the internal organization of the EU is limited. Some commentators have suggested that U.S. leaders speak out more directly about how U.S. interests are affected by the EU's internal reform debate. How the United States reacts to enlargement and to European efforts to create an autonomous defense capability also will signal attitudes toward the development of the Union. A United States that pushes for rapid and open-ended EU enlargement, or that resists the formation of a strong European defense identity, will not be in a position to argue for a cohesive Union, able to enforce its own laws and to present coherent positions in international forums.

Also important will be how the United States approaches trade. In confronting the complexity of EU decision-making, any U.S. administration is likely to proceed pragmatically—to use what-

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ever forum or process is likely to produce results in accordance with U.S. interests. While this approach is basically correct, some thinking should be devoted to how U.S. interactions with Europe might shape the longer-term evolution of the EU as an international actor. Washington has an interest in seeing the Commission (or, better yet, autonomous regulatory agencies) develop as a first line of defense against member state failures to comply with WTO obligations when those failures breach EU rules. To the extent that the Commission plays this role, U.S.-EU disputes will be transformed into intra-EU matters, with less stress placed on the WTO dispute settlement process.

To encourage progress in this direction, the United States might exercise restraint in actions that could be seen as undercutting the Commission (e.g., bilateral dialogues with member states on what are best defined as U.S.-EU rather than U.S.-member state disputes). At the same time, Washington should seek a clearer understanding with the Commission on determining when recourse to the WTO is desirable and when it might be better to allow one side or the other to work through its internal decision-making procedures. In dealing with the member states, the United States needs to signal its views on procedural issues. Unless they rein in the more aggressive and counterproductive aspects of Commission behavior in the WTO, the result will be a growing number of U.S. WTO actions against individual member states. Conveying such a position to national capitals is the logical counterpart to reminding the Commission of the importance of enforcement *vis-à-vis* the member states. The objective is the same: to prevent the development of an international double standard that will disadvantage the United States and, in the end, cripple the WTO.

In the near term, the most pressing requirement in U.S.-EU relations is to resolve or at least contain the political damage from the growing number of trade disputes. In this regard, the solution of the banana dispute early in the Bush Administration was an important step. In cases where the United States has lost in WTO panels and in the appeals process, the administration should work with Congress to bring U.S. legislation into compliance with WTO obligations. This will place it in a stronger position to insist on EU compliance when that is in U.S. interests. At the same time, Washington needs to address reform of the WTO dispute resolution mechanism, an issue that already has been placed on the agenda in Geneva. If the GATT system in which countries could block the adoption of adverse rulings is simply replaced by a new system in which they can block the implementation of WTO rulings, little will have been gained.

Apart from its interactions with the EU, how the United States positions itself with regard to other countries and regions will have important indirect effects on Europe. A starting point must be a recognition that U.S. policy in the 1990s was too Eurocentric. The first Clinton Administration took office declaring that Western Europe was "no longer the dominant area of the world" and focusing on mechanisms such as NAFTA and APEC that seemed to downplay the importance of Europe. Over the years, however, Clinton gravitated toward a policy that was heavily Eurocentric, as illustrated not only by the focus on NATO enlargement and engagement in the Balkans, but also in the diminution of the U.S.-Japanese relationship and the focus on regulatory convergence with the EU.

Excessive focus on Europe is conducive neither to good relations with the rest of the world nor with Europe itself. While Europeans do not want to be told,

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as they were in the early 1990s, that they are part of a declining region, soon to be left behind by the dynamic capitalism of Asia and North America, they also do not desire a hyperactive U.S. policy on NATO reform, expansion and out-of-area planning, or excessive concern over the alignment of European and U.S. positions on third areas and global issues. While such activism sometimes is defended as necessary to prevent the dilution of U.S. influence in Europe, it is based on a faulty assessment of the sources of that influence. Institutions and agreements are important, but in the final analysis the United States has influence in Europe because it is a global power, able to confer and deny benefits that Europe cannot secure for itself save at unacceptable costs. A less Eurocentric U.S. policy will bolster rather than undermine U.S. influence.

How the United States positions itself in the globalization debate will also influence U.S.-EU relations. The triumphalist rhetoric that has characterized U.S. pronouncements in recent years has been damaging. Rather than boasting about vague concepts of "soft power" that draw the connection between globalization and Americanization, U.S. officials should *avoid* rhetoric that equates the inexorable and anonymous forces of globalization with U.S. interests. Despite major differences over climate change and other matters, there is enormous untapped scope for U.S.-EU cooperation on regional and global issues—everything from promoting peace in the Middle East to combating HIV/AIDS in Africa. The United States should work to build such cooperation to the extent that it yields concrete results. But simply drawing up laundry lists of areas in which U.S. and European interests coincide, in hopes that cooperation in these areas will substitute for a core transatlantic agenda centered on trade and security, is illusory.

Above all, the United States should adopt an approach toward Europe that is tougher in pursuit of concrete U.S. interests but less ideological and dismissive of genuine European concerns. The United States needs to take a firmer line on European double standards on trade and the environment. It should question European over-representation in international economic forums and pose hard questions about the external costs of European policies. Instead of reacting with horror when European leaders invoke the specter of multipolarity, it should develop its own strategies for forming issue-by-issue coalitions with other countries against the EU when doing so can advance U.S. interests.

At the same time, the United States should be less ideological when it comes to arguing issues of trade and globalization. It needs to be more open to the possibility that the Europeans may be right about some issues, and that the French are absolutely right in emphasizing that globalization need not mean Europe's homogenization to U.S. norms. U.S. policymakers need to do better at defending interests because they are interests rather than because they are expressions of universal laws that other countries are obliged to accept. Unless the United States becomes more adept at listening and granting validity to European concerns, it will find itself isolated in international forums and undercut by U.S. interest groups that share European rather than official U.S. views on key issues.

For the same reasons, the United States needs to be careful about dismissing out of hand such European shibboleths as multifunctionality in agriculture, diversity in culture or precaution in food safety. The problem is not that these principles are inherently wrong—in fact, they have an appeal around the world and even in the United States. Rather, it is that Europe has an internal decision-making

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structure that all but guarantees that such principles will be applied selectively, manipulated for commercial ends, and implemented in such a way as to ensure that their benefits accrue to Europe while their costs are imposed on the rest of the world. Only by being open to other countries' ideas and able to embrace its own version of multipolarity will the United States be in a position to engage with and, if necessary, counter an EU that enters the 21st century determined to be, if not a superstate, very much a superpower that is prepared to challenge American influence and to assert its economic and political power around the globe. □

Perpetual Cacophony

"Peace impossible, war improbable"—thus Raymond Aron famously summed up the cold war. Of the European Union in the early twenty-first century I would say: "unity impossible, collapse improbable."

To be sure, "unity" means different things in different European languages. But almost nobody is now talking about a "United States of Europe" in the way they still were ten years ago. The growing number and diversity of member states make such agreement ever less likely. . . .

"Collapse improbable" is a more risky statement. After all, every previous alliance, coalition, entente, empire, community or monetary union of European states has collapsed sooner or later. The EU is different because of its intimate mesh of habitual cooperation and its many permanent, institutionalized mechanisms for resolving conflicts. This is no longer the Concert of Europe, meeting occasionally at a Congress of Vienna or Berlin. It is a permanent Orchestra of Europe, meeting and playing together all the time.

—Timothy Garton Ash, *New York Review of Books*, May 17, 2001

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The Asymmetry of Pity

Yossi Klein Halevi

MY MOST instructive conversation on the Middle East conflict was not with a politician or a journalist but with a soft-spoken Palestinian Anglican minister named Naim Ateek, whose group, Sabeel, promotes a Palestinian version of liberation theology. During a long and friendly talk about two years ago, we agreed on the need for a "dialogue of the heart" as opposed to a strictly functional approach to peace between our peoples. In that spirit, I acknowledged that we Israelis should formally concede the wrongs we had committed against the Palestinians. Then I asked him whether he was prepared to offer a reciprocal gesture, a confession of Palestinian moral flaws. Both sides, after all, had amply wronged each other during our hundred-year war. The Palestinian leadership had collaborated with the Nazis and rejected the 1947 UN partition plan, and then led the international campaign to delegitimize Israel that threatened our post-Holocaust reconstruction. What was Rev. Ateek prepared to do to reassure my people that it was safe to withdraw back to the narrow borders of pre-1967 Israel and voluntarily make ourselves vulnerable in one of the least stable and tolerant regions of the world?

"We don't have to do anything at all to reassure you", he said. He offered this historical analogy: When David Ben-Gurion and Konrad Adenauer negotiated the German-Israeli reparations agreement in the early 1950s, the Israeli prime minister was hardly expected to offer the German chancellor concessions or psychological reassurances. The Germans had been the murderers, the Jews the victims, and all that remained to be negotiated was the extent of indemnity.

"So we are your Nazis?", I asked.

"Now you've understood", he replied, and smiled.

I have thought often of that conversation since the collapse last fall of any pretense of a mutual process of reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis. With disarming sincerity, Rev. Ateek offered the most cogent explanation I had encountered for why the Oslo peace process never had a chance to succeed.

From the start, Palestinian-Israeli peacemaking was burdened by asymmetry. The gap between Israeli power and Palestinian powerlessness was translated into a political process that required tangible Israeli concessions—reversible only through war—in exchange for Palestinian promises of peace: In essence, land for

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words. But the deepest and most intractable asymmetry has been psychological: it has been an asymmetry of pity, or, more precisely, of self-pity. The Palestinians, as losers of the conflict, continue to see themselves solely as victims, without guilt for helping maintain the conflict or responsibility for helping to end it; indeed, for many Palestinians, the war is not over borders but absolute justice, a battle between good and evil. Because history has been kinder to them, Israelis can afford to concede complexity and, indeed, the Israeli mainstream now perceives the conflict as a competition between two legitimate national movements over the same tortured strip of land. Aside from the hard-right minority, most Israelis acknowledge that both sides share rights and wrongs.

Zionism's Victory over Jewish Self-Pity

THE FIRST generation of Israelis after statehood resembled Palestinians today in their simplistic view of the struggle over the land as an absolutist moral conflict. In every generation, as the Passover Haggadah puts it, a new enemy rises to destroy the Jews and, for most Israelis, this was the Arabs' turn. A popular Yiddish pun emphasized the point: Hitler fell into the water, it went, and emerged "nasser"—Yiddish for wet, and a reference to Egypt's president, Gamal Abdul Nasser, Israel's great antagonist during its formative years.

Only gradually did Israelis begin to see the conflict with the Palestinians and the Arab world generally as a fundamental break from the pattern of Jewish history—that Zionism's hard gift to the Jews was to restore to us our collective free will, transform us from passive victims of fate to active shapers of our own destiny, responsible for the consequences of our decisions. A key turning point was the November 1977 visit of Anwar Sadat to Israel. Remarkably, a mere four years after Egypt's surprise attack against Israel on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, Sadat was welcomed as a hero in the streets of Jerusalem. The Israeli notion of the Arab world as an impenetrable wall of hostility began to change. So too, Israeli certainty about the justness of its cause was subtly challenged: Many Israelis, including Ehud Barak, began to suspect that Israel could have prevented the 1973 Yom Kippur War had it agreed to withdraw from the Sinai in the early 1970s. The subsequent invasion of Lebanon in 1982, followed in late 1987 by the first *intifada*, reinforced for Israelis the moral ambiguity of the Middle East conflict.

At the same time, Israel's sense of siege began to ease. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the repeal of the UN "Zionism is racism" resolution, the post-Gulf War optimism in the Middle East, the mass Russian immigration and resulting Israeli prosperity—all reinforced the same message that Israel had entered a new era and was about to fulfill the long-deferred Zionist promise of Jewish normalization. Finally, a new generation of native-born Israelis that could take Jewish sovereignty for granted no longer saw itself as living in the pathology of Jewish history but in a new Israeli reality.

Indeed, young Israelis became so distanced from the traumas of Exile that the Israeli Ministry of Education felt impelled in the 1990s to introduce pilgrimages to Nazi death camps in Poland for high school students, as an emotional crash course in Jewish history. In politics, too, the Holocaust lost its centrality: Only the hard Right and the ultra-Orthodox continued to cite the genocide of European Jewry as a potentially recurring threat. Whereas former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin once routinely invoked the Nazi era—and even publicly compared himself, during the invasion of

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Lebanon, to an Allied commander closing in on Hitler's bunker—his equally right-wing politician son, Benny, confined his traumas to the Middle East. Thanks largely to the effects of Israeli sovereignty on the Jewish psyche, a wound that should have taken generations to heal began to recede into history. By the time of the Oslo agreement in September 1993, a majority of Israelis had been weaned from the self-defensiveness of the victim and educated in the moral dilemmas of the conqueror.

The Weight of Palestinian Self-Pity

IT WOULD be unrealistic to expect a similar evolution among Palestinians who, after all, lack fifty years of sovereignty to compensate for their historical trauma. The Palestinians are at a different stage of their national development, resembling Israel in its early years, celebrating nationalism and self-sacrifice and mistrusting moral complexity as weakness. Yet that psychological gap between Israelis and Palestinians was precisely Oslo's great structural flaw. The problem with the Oslo process, as Ariel Sharon has noted, was not its goals but its timetable, its *lack* of ample "process." Oslo's implicit expectation was that Israel would return to approximately the June 1967 borders after a mere seven years of tenuous relations with the Palestinian entity, well before the Palestinians could be emotionally prepared to offer Israelis even the most minimal sense of safety and acceptance in the region.

On the Israeli side, a vigorous and successful effort was made by Labor Party leaders to wean the public from its emotional attachment to the biblical borders of "greater Israel." Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres repeatedly told the Israeli people that the dream of greater Israel was unrealistic and self-destructive. That message was reinforced by the Israeli media, often by what we journalists chose to omit as much as to publish. I recall, for example, reading an account in the *Jerusalem Post*'s media column, written by right-wing commentator David Bar-Ilan, just after the White House handshake of September 1993. The column reported on a speech delivered by Yasser Arafat in Amman in which the Palestinian chairman noted that by signing the Oslo Accords he was merely implementing the "stages" policy—that is, the 1974 PLO decision to accept whatever territory Israel evacuated and continue struggling until the demise of the Jewish state. My instinctive reaction was that the account must be exaggerated: Bar-Ilan, after all, was a right-wing ideologue. Despite the devastating implications of that speech, I did not bother checking whether Bar-Ilan's report was accurate, precisely because I feared that it might be. Nor did I want to be tainted by association with the right-wing opposition. That combination of wishful thinking and cowardice characterized most Israeli journalists, at least in the early years of the Oslo process.

In contrast with Israel's contortionist efforts to adapt to Oslo's false promise, no attempt was made by Palestinian leaders to accommodate the Jewish state in their people's mental map of the Middle East. Indeed, the self-justifying myths of the Palestinians have only become more entrenched since Oslo. The Palestinian people are routinely told by their controlled media that the Temple never existed on the Temple Mount, that the biblical stories did not occur in Israel/Palestine, and even that the Holocaust is a lie. The consistent message is that the Palestinians are victims of a false Jewish narrative.

Rather than challenging the Palestinians' wholesale expropriation of justice and truth, the international community has encouraged their self-perception as inno-

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cent victims of the Middle East conflict. Every year on May 15, as Palestinians violently mark the *nakba*, or tragedy, of 1948, much of the world's media dutifully replays the Palestinian version of that event. Few journalists challenge Palestinian spokesmen with the fact that Arab rejectionism was at least partly responsible for their people's uprooting and occupation. Indulging that sense of blameless victimization has only reinforced the Palestinian inability to assume the role of equal partner in negotiations and take responsibility for helping to end the conflict. As Naim Ateek put it, the Palestinians' only obligation to peacemaking is to show up and receive concessions. The Palestinian leadership has felt no moral obligation to fulfill its stated commitments under Oslo—such as curbing terrorism and ending incitement or even the straightforward matter of revoking the Palestinian Covenant that calls for the destruction of Israel. (To this day it is uncertain whether the Palestinians have legally revoked the Covenant, and their deliberately created ambiguity has negated any positive impact its revocation may have had on the Palestinian psyche.)

The apologetics offered by much of the international community—and by part of the Israeli Left—for Arafat's violent rejection of Barak's peace offer have reinforced the pathological tendencies of Palestinian self-pity. Especially absurd has been the claim that Barak's settlement-building was a sign of bad faith that undermined Arafat's trust in the process. Nearly all the housing starts begun under Barak were concentrated in areas intended to become settlement blocs—whose permanence the Palestinians accepted during negotiations at Camp David. According to Barak's chief negotiator with the Palestinians, Gilad Sher, settlements—whose total built areas cover a mere 1.5 percent of the West Bank—were not even among the five major issues of disagreement during the Camp David negotiations. Instead, the major issues were the Palestinian insistence that Israel assume full moral blame for the flight of the refugees in 1948 (ignoring the Arab world's invasion of Israel that preceded the refugee crisis), and the Palestinian refusal to acknowledge any Jewish connection to the Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site.

When confronted with the continued ideological intransigence of the Palestinians, the Israeli left-wing retort was invariably a sarcastic dismissal: "We don't expect them to become Zionists." Even as it successfully compelled a reluctant Israeli public to confront at least some truths of the Palestinian narrative, the Left refused to demand *any* reciprocity from its Palestinian partner. In so doing, the Left ignored its own argument: that without accommodating the Other's narrative, peace would be impossible.

The Israeli Left committed one more fatal tactical mistake: It divorced itself emotionally from Judea and Samaria, even as the Palestinians reinforced their emotional claim to pre-1967 Israel. The moral basis for partition of Israel/Palestine is that two peoples, profoundly rooted in the entirety of the land, must each sacrifice part of its legitimate claim to accommodate the legitimate claim of its rival. But by tacitly rejecting even a theoretical Israeli right to Judea and Samaria, the Left created a moral imbalance: The Palestinians were offering a traumatic concession by ceding parts of historic Palestine, whereas Israel was merely restoring occupied—that is, stolen—land. That imbalance reinforced the Palestinians' refusal to compromise on the 1967 borders, even though no independent Palestinian state had ever existed on any part of the land.

The success of Oslo was predicated on the Palestinians' ability to convince Israelis to trust them enough to empower them. But soon after the White House

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signing, increasing numbers of Israelis began to suspect they had been deliberately deceived. That process accelerated with Arafat's 1995 speech in a Johannesburg mosque, in which he compared Oslo to a ceasefire the Prophet Muhammad signed with an Arabian tribe he later destroyed. By dismissing that speech as mere rhetoric intended to appease domestic opposition, the Israeli Left made a fatal miscalculation of its devastating effect on the Israeli public. Then came the wave of suicide bombings in early 1996, which further eroded Oslo's credibility among even centrist Israelis and provided a link between Arafat's incitement and intensified terrorism.

The inevitable result was a revolt by the Israeli majority that had initially welcomed the Oslo Accords and that had been willing to make far-reaching concessions for genuine peace. The first revolt occurred in 1996, with the election of Benyamin Netanyahu. Apologists for the Palestinians insist that Israel under Netanyahu helped destroy the Oslo process by resuming massive settlement-building, largely frozen under Rabin, thereby eroding Palestinian trust in Israeli intentions. That argument ignores the fact that the election of Netanyahu was a self-inflicted Palestinian wound—a direct result of Arafat's refusal to fulfill his most minimal obligations under the Oslo accords. The erratic voting pattern of the Israeli public throughout the Oslo process—repeatedly veering between Left and Right, from Yitzhak Rabin to Benyamin Netanyahu to Ehud Barak to Ariel Sharon—reflected both the growing skepticism of Israelis and their reluctance to repudiate the hopes raised by Oslo. Only with the landslide election of Sharon, who had warned for decades against empowering the PLO, did the Israeli people deliver its definitive judgment on the Oslo process, as one of the gravest mistakes in the history of Israel.

Unchanged Palestinian Goals

BY REFUSING to "partition" justice and insisting that historical right belongs exclusively to them, the Palestinians have preempted the need, in their minds, to revise their long-term goal of undoing the "injustice" of Israel's existence. Indeed, when Palestinian leaders speak of a "just and lasting peace", it is now clear that they mean, in the long term, peace without a Jewish state. Mainstream Palestinian leaders no longer invoke the old crude slogan of throwing the Jews into the sea. Instead, the scenario has become more complex, a gradual eroding of Israel that includes undermining its will to fight and to believe in itself; loss of territorial intactness; a compromising of its sovereignty via international commissions, observers and "peacekeepers"; increased radicalization of Arab Israelis leading to demands for "autonomy" and even the secession of those parts of the Galilee and the Negev where Arabs could soon form a majority.

Indeed, the key element in the "stages" plan is the massive return—both through Israeli consent and illegal infiltration—of embittered and inassimilable Palestinian refugees to pre-1967 Israel. By refusing to concede the "right of return", the Palestinian leadership belies its claim that it has recognized Israel in its pre-1967 borders. For Palestinians, the great crime of Zionism was artificially transforming the Jews into a majority in any part of Israel/Palestine—through Jewish immigration ("colonization") and Arab expulsion and flight. In a stunning speech to Arab diplomats in Stockholm in 1996, Arafat laid out his vision of undoing the Jewish majority even within pre-1967 Israel. By overwhelming the land with refugees and expropriating water and other resources as well as turning a blind eye to ongoing Palestinian terrorism, Arafat would ensure that a large part of the Israeli middle class

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would emigrate in despair to the West. The remaining Jews would be so disoriented and demoralized by the departure of Israel's most talented citizens that the state would eventually collapse from within.

That this was no mad fantasy on Arafat's part but an accurate reflection of mainstream Palestinian strategy was confirmed by the late Faisal Husseini, long considered by the Israeli peace camp to be among the most pragmatic Palestinian leaders. In an interview with the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Arabi*, Husseini made the remarkable admission that the Oslo process was a "Trojan horse." He explained: "When we are asking all the Palestinian forces and factions to look at the Oslo Agreement and at other agreements as 'temporary' procedures, or phased goals, this means that we are ambushing the Israelis and cheating them." The goal, he concluded, was "the liberation of Palestine from the river to the sea"—that is, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Though it appears that *Al-Arabi's* claim that its interview with Husseini was the "last" before his death in June is false, the veracity of its substance should not be doubted; Husseini made similar statements in a meeting with Lebanese lawyers in Beirut last March.

In a private conversation I held about two years ago in Gaza with the head of one of the dozen or so Palestinian security services established by Arafat, I was offered a benign vision of that dream of Israel's demise: "This land is too small to sustain two states", explained the commander. "When the refugees return, there won't be enough resources and we will be forced to create one state—a beautiful country that will show the world how Muslims and Jews can coexist, just like in the days of Muslim Spain." That historical model, of course, is based on a Muslim sovereign majority and a dependent Jewish minority.

It is hardly coincidence, too, that the model most invoked by Arafat for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is South Africa. Israeli left-wingers misinterpreted that constant reference to South Africa as proof that the PLO leadership had embraced peaceful reconciliation. In fact, what most appeals to Palestinian leaders in the South African precedent is the transition from minority to majority rule. Though the Jews constitute a slim majority in the whole of Israel/Palestine and an overwhelming majority within the pre-1967 borders, Palestinian leaders believe that this is a temporary aberration. When the refugees begin returning (and Jews begin leaving), the "natural" majority will reemerge, and the Jewish minority, like the white South African minority, will then be compelled to negotiate the terms of its own surrender. This is why Nabil Sha'ath, the PA Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, told a Washington audience on June 21 that the January 2001 Taba negotiations "witnessed significant progress." Of what did that progress consist? "A conceptual breakthrough on the issue of refugees and the right of return", said Sha'ath, who described Israeli negotiators as acknowledging that "Israel was responsible for the initiation of the refugee problem" and as agreeing that "the Palestinians had a right to return to both Israel and Palestine."[1]

Israel After Oslo

THERE CERTAINLY exist Palestinians capable of accommodating the Israeli narrative into their understanding of the conflict. Some of them are my friends and colleagues—a Palestinian Israeli academic who welcomes Israel's existence as essential for Middle Eastern evolution, a West

[1]Quoted from a rapporteur's summary of Sha'ath's remarks to a policy forum of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, June 21, 2001.

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Bank sheykh who believes it is God's will that the Jews returned to this land, a former leader of the first *intifada* who has come to realize that Zionism "wasn't just a form of colonialism but the return of a people home." Understandably, it is easiest for Palestinian citizens of Israel to reconcile with Israel, more difficult for Palestinians in the territories, and more difficult still for Palestinian refugees in the diaspora. The tragedy of the Oslo Accords was to impose on West Bank Palestinians—with whom Israel's conflict is, potentially, territorial rather than existential—the revolutionary leadership of the diaspora, which represents the Palestinian grievance of 1948; that is, the very existence of a Jewish state. The effect has been to suppress those Palestinian voices advocating genuine reconciliation. Even much of the Israeli Left today concedes that Israel gambled on the wrong man in mortgaging the peace process to Yasser Arafat. Many other Israelis would extend that critique to include the entire PLO-Tunis leadership. Israel has empowered a Palestinian leadership that is unwilling to revise its morally exclusionist view of the conflict. Genuine peace is impossible when one partner considers the other's very existence illegitimate.

THE GROWING tendency among Palestinians and Arabs generally to view the Middle East conflict as a battle between good and evil has led to an outbreak of crude Jew-hatred, on both the official and mass levels, unprecedented since Europe in the early 1940s. By insisting that Israel's very founding is immoral, much of the Arab world inevitably finds itself aligned with classical anti-Semitism, which considered Jewish existence itself a crime. The state-controlled Egyptian media has revived the medieval blood libel and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Official newspapers in Syria, Lebanon, and in the Palestinian Authority deny that the Holocaust happened; indeed, Arab countries are the only places in the world where Holocaust denial enjoys mainstream credibility. Ahmad Ragab, a columnist for the Egyptian government-sponsored newspaper, *Al-Akhbar*, disagreed with the growing Holocaust revisionism: He noted that the Holocaust did indeed happen, and he expressed his gratitude to Hitler—"although we do have a complaint against him for his revenge on [the Jews] was not enough." A recent hit on Egyptian radio was called "I Hate Israel"—and the state *censor* boasted that he *inserted* the title line into the song.

Though largely ignored by the international community, this growing chorus of hatred has reinforced the tendency of the Israeli mainstream to once again view the Arab world as genocidally-minded. Holocaust terminology has seeped back into Israeli discourse, emerging from unlikely sources. In a recent letter of political contrition written by former left-wing activist Edna Shabbtai to her friend, right-wing activist Geula Cohen, Shabbtai invoked the Holocaust in her call for a war against the Palestinian Authority: "We need to read again the poster that [partisan leader] Abba Kovner directed at the Jews of Lithuania in 1942: 'Jews! Don't go like sheep to the slaughter.'"

Despite the growing sense among Israelis that we have slipped back into the pathology of Jewish history, Israeli society has not reverted to a simplistic moral understanding of the roots of the Middle East conflict. Most Israelis still perceive the conflict as being fought between two legitimate national movements; if a majority were convinced that a credible partner had emerged on the other side, they would opt, even now, for partition. While sympathy for the settlers under attack has grown, there has been no increase in political support for their annexationist agenda. Israel has repudiated the illusions

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of the Left, but it has hardly returned to the equally fantastic alternative of the annexationist Right. Indeed, most Israelis would probably agree that, together, both ideological camps share responsibility for the disaster—the Right, by inserting armed Jewish fanatics into Palestinian population centers; the Left, by empowering a Palestinian terrorist army on the border of Jewish population centers. Together, Right and Left have created the conditions for apocalypse in the territories.

In this atmosphere, the option that increasingly appeals to Israelis is unilateral withdrawal—itself an expression of despair in both greater Israel and a negotiated peace. The advantages of unilateral withdrawal would be to extricate us from a pathological process that ties us to a partner whose goal is our destruction, and allow us to build a fence along borders we ourselves determine as essential for Israel's security. Unilateral withdrawal would grant the Palestinians sovereignty over most of the territories, but preserve Israeli rule over areas of dense settlement, the strategically vital Jordan Valley and, most crucially, over united Jerusalem. The notion of "sharing" Jerusalem with a violent and expansionist Palestinian Authority is now seen by most Israelis—even by many who in principle are prepared to share sovereignty—as an intolerable security risk that would almost certainly lead to the dismemberment of the city. The main disadvantage of unilateral withdrawal would be to magnify the impression created by Israel's hasty retreat from Lebanon—signaling the Arab world and especially the Palestinians that Israel is on the run, thereby inviting further violence and increasing the possibility of regional war.

In theory, only a national unity government—enjoying overwhelming public support and headed by Ariel Sharon, who built most of the settlements—could dare implement a unilateral withdrawal, necessitating the traumatic uprooting of dozens of Jewish communities embedded deep in the West Bank and populated by the most ideologically committed settlers. In practice, though, Sharon has repeatedly vowed not to initiate any move requiring the massive uprooting of Jews from their homes, and he should be taken at his word. True, there is the Yamit precedent—when Sharon, as Minister of Agriculture in Menachem Begin's government in 1982, bulldozed the Sinai town of Yamit as part of Israel's withdrawal from Sinai. But Sinai's historical, religious and especially strategic significance for Israelis cannot be compared to that of Judea and Samaria. Yamit existed for barely eight years; by contrast, the West Bank settlements have already produced a second generation of native Judeans and Samarians.

Moreover, Sharon has repeatedly dismissed separation as an illusion: Jews and Arabs, he believes, are too economically and even geographically entwined. Finally, Sharon has since expressed regret for destroying Yamit: During a pre-election interview I conducted with him, he noted that Israel should have withdrawn to the international border in Sinai only in exchange for genuine peace, while in practice it received only an extended ceasefire. He will almost certainly continue to reject the notion of unilateral withdrawal from Judea and Samaria without a negotiated peace—inconceivable in the forseeable future.

Still, if the current conflict with the Palestinians deepens and widens into regional war, pressure from within Israeli society and especially the army could induce Sharon to invoke the precedent of 1948, when some isolated and besieged settlements were evacuated. As hatred and self-righteousness increasingly determine the Arab agenda, the ground is being prepared for that scenario. □

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Bonn Voyage

Kyoto's Uncertain Revival

Daniel Bodansky

REPORTS OF Kyoto's death seem to have been exaggerated. Just when most observers were writing Kyoto's obituary, the international community reached a breakthrough in Bonn, resolving many of the key political issues and thereby breathing new life into the Kyoto process. But although Kyoto has shown surprising resilience, it is hardly a done deal. Much work remains before it enters into force, let alone before it can be considered a success. Moreover, despite the events in Bonn, the United States does not appear likely to join Kyoto anytime soon. This means that even if Kyoto does go forward, it will apply to only about a quarter of the world's emissions of greenhouse gases, with no near-term prospect for expanding its coverage.

Thus, amid justifiable celebration of the Bonn agreement, a critical assessment is in order. While Kyoto is an impressive achievement, bearing little resemblance to the bogeyman of conservative lore, the very features that make Kyoto so remarkable—its novelty, complexity and ambition—may also undermine its long-term workability. Even many of us working over the past few years to bring it into effect were painfully aware of its weaknesses. Generally, our response was to suspend disbelief and soldier on. To us, the negotiations had the same quality that Woody Allen once ascribed to relationships: like a shark, they had to move forward or they would die. Kyoto may have problems, we acknowledged, but it's the only game in town. Better to push it over the finish line and hope it works than to start all over again, with no guarantee of doing better.

The silver lining in President Bush's repudiation of Kyoto is that it has created the possibility of a new, more open-ended dialogue about climate change policy. For the past five years, Kyoto has sucked most of the oxygen out of this debate. Even in the wake of the U.S. decision, it has continued to cast a long shadow, with supporters proposing modest fixes and opponents (including the President) concentrating on Kyoto's sins without—so far, anyway—proposing any constructive alternative.

In going forward, the first step is to move beyond the ritualistic justifications and denunciations of Kyoto in order to take stock of the deeper lessons it teaches. Fundamentally, Kyoto treats a long-term problem as though it were a short-term crisis. Just as importantly, its architecture reflects a rationalist paradigm that tends to ignore the messy institutional and

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political realities of international life. Kyoto attempts to create a complex, global system from scratch rather than proceeding experientially, building from the bottom up. In considering what to do next, we are well advised to remember that most successful international regimes such as the GATT have developed differently, starting small or simply (or both) and adding parties and complexity in a step-by-step manner.[1]

A Retrospective on the Climate Change Negotiations

WHATEVER ITS weaknesses, that Kyoto was adopted at all was a remarkable accomplishment. Climate change is perhaps the most intractable issue facing the international community. Most scientists believe the problem is serious, but many uncertainties remain, allowing skeptics to argue for delay until more is known. Most of its adverse effects will not be apparent for many decades, well beyond the planning horizons of most governments or individuals. It requires an unprecedented level of international cooperation, since emissions everywhere contribute to the problem. And it is ubiquitous. Virtually every human activity—manufacturing, transportation, agriculture—emits greenhouse gases. Climate change thus presents policymakers with the worst imaginable combination of features: it requires them to begin taking actions now, affecting most aspects of daily life, to combat a distant and uncertain threat.

When climate change first emerged as a political issue in the late 1980s, the initial international response focused on the science. In 1988, with the active support of the United States, the United Nations established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to provide periodic scientific assessments (the most recent one appeared earlier this year). Very quickly, however, the European Union and small island states (who fear being inundated by rising seas) began to call for mandatory reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The debate ever since has focused on whether to establish national emissions targets and, if so, at what level of stringency and with what mechanisms of implementation.

In the initial round of negotiations prior to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the first Bush Administration successfully fended off European efforts to establish legally-binding emission targets. Instead, the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change contains only a non-binding political aim, together with a long-term objective (stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations at non-dangerous levels) and various principles to guide the evolution of the regime (e.g., equity between industrialized and developing countries, cost-effectiveness and precaution).

The ink had barely dried on the Framework Convention, however, when many countries began to argue that the Convention's "commitments" were inadequate. The new Clinton Administration agreed and in 1995 accepted the Berlin Mandate, which called for the negotiation of additional commitments for industrialized countries. Two years later, the negotiations concluded with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol.

As one of the most innovative and ambitious international agreements ever negotiated, Kyoto has inspired hyperbole by proponents and opponents alike. The real story is, as usual, more complex.

Kyoto sets forth both a long-term architecture and short-term commitments. At the core of the long-term archi-

[1]For a generally compatible approach, see Henry S. Rowen and John P. Weyant, "Staying Cool about Global Warming", *The National Interest* (Fall 1999).

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tecture are legally-binding national commitments to reduce total greenhouse gas emissions, which apply to multiple-year "commitment periods" and govern emissions of six greenhouse gases, among them carbon dioxide. In achieving these commitments, Kyoto allows countries considerable flexibility. It prescribes a result, but lets countries determine how to achieve that result, including through the use of market-based mechanisms such as emissions trading or through forestry and agricultural activities that remove carbon from the atmosphere (so-called carbon "sinks").

Generally, critics focus not on Kyoto's long-term architecture but on its short-term emission targets for the five-year period running from 2008 to 2012. These targets, however, were intended to be the first word on combating climate change, not the last. Of course they were politically rather than scientifically based and did not include developing countries. But no emissions target could have had a scientific basis since scientists do not (and probably cannot) agree on what levels of greenhouse gases are "safe."[2] The Kyoto targets at least head the world in what most scientists agree is the right direction, toward lower emissions, and could eventually include developing countries. In the long term, developing country targets will be essential for stabilizing emissions. Kyoto does not preclude such targets; it merely reflects the view that industrialized countries should take the lead in reducing emissions, both because they created the problem in the first place (through their historical emissions) and have the greatest capacity to respond.

Although, by some measures, the Kyoto targets are relatively modest and by themselves would not significantly curb global warming, even so they probably require too much too soon both politically and economically. The U.S. target, for example, is "only" a seven percent reduction from 1990 emissions levels. But given high economic growth over the past decade (and the lack of significant domestic action to curb the resulting increase in emissions), the reductions from business-as-usual projections for the 2008–2012 period would be about 30–35 percent. Although significant opportunities may exist to reduce emissions at little or no cost (particularly when other environmental benefits, such as reduced local air pollution, are factored in), the extent of these "no regrets" options is uncertain.[3] At the same time, the economic costs of Kyoto could be severe, particularly since it would require companies to retrofit or prematurely retire existing capital stocks, rather than take advantage of the regular pattern of capital turnover, phasing out equipment as it becomes obsolete. An important aspect of the Bonn agreement was effectively to make the Kyoto targets easier for some key countries, including Japan.

The Bonn Surprise

THE KYOTO agreement left many important issues open. The international negotiations ever since have tried to put meat on Kyoto's bones by elaborating detailed rules for how Kyoto's market mechanisms, carbon sinks provisions and compliance system will work. Pending adoption of these rules, few industrialized countries have been willing to proceed with ratification. Originally, the Kyoto rules were scheduled for completion in November 2000 in The Hague. But The Hague conference broke down without any agreement, so countries decided to continue the negotiations in Bonn during July 2001.

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[2]Brian Tucker, "Science Friction: The Politics of Global Warming", *The National Interest* (Fall 1997).

[3]Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2001: Mitigation* (2001).

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To the surprise of most observers, the Bonn meeting succeeded where The Hague meeting had failed. Countries reached agreement on most of the main outstanding issues, thereby paving the way for ratification. Many factors contributed to Bonn's unexpected success. At The Hague, countries played a game of chicken, hoping that others would relent first. They waited so long to advance compromise proposals that there was insufficient time even to understand what others were suggesting, let alone engage in genuine negotiation. At Bonn, countries realized that they could not count on pulling a rabbit out of the hat at the last minute and that, if they continued to engage in brinkmanship, a second failure could kill Kyoto altogether. Moreover, since The Hague failure, they had had months to analyze and digest potential compromises.

But perhaps the decisive factor contributing to Bonn's success was President Bush's own actions. Before the meeting, most observers had expected that his rejection of Kyoto would deflate the process, depriving it of the momentum necessary for success. But Bush's decision had the opposite effect: It united countries around the Kyoto Protocol and galvanized them into action. The peremptory way in which the administration acted—repudiating years of multilateral work in response to domestic special interests, without consulting other countries or undertaking a serious policy review—combined with his failure to offer a credible alternative, stuck in other countries' craws. When the spokesman for the developing countries declared at the end of the meeting that the Bonn agreement represented the triumph of multilateralism over unilateralism, he received a rousing ovation. The Bush Administration compounded its mistakes by taunting the Europeans for not having ratified Kyoto, implying that they were hypocrites. Thus, the European Union came to Bonn determined to make whatever compromises were necessary to reach agreement and so prove Bush wrong.[4]

American disengagement from the Bonn negotiations also made agreement easier from a substantive standpoint. In The Hague, the Clinton Administration felt it had to win on virtually every issue to have even a prayer of overcoming Senate opposition to Kyoto. By contrast, other countries had fewer walk-away issues and thus could agree more easily on a compromise package in Bonn. In particular, the U.S. absence made one of the most contentious issues easier to resolve: how much credit to give for the carbon sucked out of the atmosphere by carbon "sinks." With the United States out, the Europeans had plenty of room to accommodate the demands for sink credits by Japan and Canada, since they no longer had to satisfy the much larger demands of the United States.

Four Lessons of the Kyoto Process

DESPITE THE Bonn agreement, Kyoto has a long way to go before we can assess its effectiveness in combating climate change. In the meantime, the Bonn agreement now makes it more likely that the United States will go its separate way, at least in the near term, rather than re-engage directly in the ongoing global negotiations. In charting a future course, what lessons can we learn from the Kyoto process? At the root of Kyoto's troubles has been the failure to observe four basic precepts of sound treaty-making.

[4]For a general appraisal of Europe's use of issues such as climate change to counterbalance U.S. hegemony, see Josef Joffe, "Who's Afraid of Mr. Big?", *The National Interest* (Summer 2001).

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Lesson 1: Walk Before You Run

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN once remarked that the most exquisite folly is reason spun too fine. If Kyoto ultimately fails, this could be its epitaph. Rather than starting simply, with an agreement that is easy to implement and fulfill, it takes a grandiose approach, establishing ambitious emission reduction targets and an elaborate architecture whose success will depend on an extraordinary degree of international cooperation and good faith—commodities in short supply in the climate change regime. For example:

- Kyoto controls not only carbon dioxide, the principal greenhouse gas, but also five other gases, including methane and nitrous oxide, that are difficult to monitor reliably.

- Kyoto contemplates the first full-blown system of international emissions trading. Although emissions trading has been used successfully in the United States to combat acid rain, implementing such a system internationally will involve a host of difficult issues relating to eligibility, liability and compliance.

- As a result of the Bonn agreement, countries can receive credit for carbon removed from the atmosphere by carbon "sinks"—for example, forests and farmlands. But carbon sinks are natural phenomenon that increase and decrease for a variety of reasons, not just as a result of human activities. Determining the degree to which countries should receive credit (or debits) for such changes raises extraordinarily difficult conceptual and scientific issues, which are generally glossed over in the Bonn agreement.

- Kyoto creates a Clean Development Mechanism that will allow industrialized countries to receive credit for emission reduction projects in developing countries. But implementing this mechanism will require the creation of an elaborate institutional structure to oversee the process.

The desire of the United States to include these and many other equally complicated elements in Kyoto was understandable. Supporters justified each as providing the flexibility needed to meet stringent emission reduction targets. Perhaps if the European Union had not pushed for such ambitious targets, the United States would have sought fewer bells and whistles but, be that as it may, the end result was a highly complex agreement requiring much further elaboration. Although the Bonn agreement resolved the most contentious political issues, and adoption of the detailed rules for emissions trading (the Clean Development Mechanism and carbon sinks) appears within reach at a meeting this fall in Marrakesh, whether the new rules and institutions will actually work remains uncertain. In most cases, they involve novel mechanisms that would tax the capacity of even established, highly-developed national institutions, much less comparatively new international institutions that have yet to establish their authority or to develop traditions of good faith and cooperation.

The history of international institutions suggests that successful institutions tend to start small and build. The GATT, for example, began with a relatively small number of countries, addressed a few core issues, and had a relatively simple institutional structure. The 1992 Framework Convention began down a similar path: although it involved many more countries than the original GATT, it established only general principles and

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obligations to address climate change, together with basic institutions and procedures. Before this system had been given a serious chance to develop, however, it was supplanted by the Kyoto Protocol, which in essence seeks a full-blown regime all at once. In moving forward, the better approach would be to proceed incrementally, adding stringency and complexity over time as states gain confidence in the regime. This would avoid overtaxing the regime before a sense of community has developed among the parties. It would also allow states to test out ideas and learn from experience. Such an approach would not create the illusion of quick results, as Kyoto has. But it might build a more solid edifice appropriate for a long-term problem such as climate change.

Lesson 2: No Representation Without Taxation

LIKE A CONTRACT, a treaty typically involves a mutual exchange of promises among the parties. Under the Montreal Protocol, for example, the United States agreed to limit its use of ozone-depleting substances in exchange for a similar commitment from other countries. The Kyoto Protocol, however, does not adhere to this basic tenet of treaty practice. Though negotiated by virtually the entire world community, it represents a promise by only a limited group of countries to control their emissions.[5]

Critics of Kyoto claim that it is unfair that developing countries such as China and India have no emission reduction targets. But the unfairness lies less in the lack of developing country targets than in the fact that they have been allowed, nevertheless, to be full-fledged participants in the negotiations. This has created the odd situation that developing countries have had a significant say in determining rules that would not apply to themselves. Indeed, over the past several years, developing countries even threatened to block the adoption of the Kyoto rules unless they received significant financial assistance. In Bonn, they extracted agreement to create three new international funds, as well as a pledge from the European Union and other developed countries for significant climate change funding. In effect, developing countries have successfully demanded that developed countries pay them for the privilege of making economic sacrifices to address climate change.

This paradoxical situation stemmed from the 1995 Berlin Mandate, which initiated the Kyoto negotiations. Prior to the Berlin meeting, U.S. negotiators had briefly considered undertaking the Kyoto negotiations among a smaller group of countries that were willing to assume emission reduction targets. Ultimately, they decided to pursue the negotiations under the Climate Convention (which includes virtually every country in the world), seeking a negotiating mandate that left open the possibility of designating developing country emission targets. When developing countries opposed this approach and insisted that the mandate specifically rule out any new commitments for themselves, the United States had the choice of whether to continue under the Climate Convention or to seek a separate agreement among fewer, more like-minded states. It opted for the former in the hope that it could get around the Berlin Mandate and bring developing countries on board; proceeding separately, in contrast, would have meant giving up any pretense of obtaining developing country participation.

In retrospect, the Berlin Mandate

[5]More than 160 countries typically take part in the climate change negotiations.

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presented the United States and other industrialized countries with the worst of both worlds: on the one hand, it specifically ruled out developing country commitments, at least for the first commitment period; on the other hand, it allowed them to remain full-fledged participants in the negotiations. A better approach would have been to say at the outset: only countries willing to pay (in the coin of obligation) may play. This would have presented developing countries with a choice: acknowledge a willingness to accept new commitments or stay out of the negotiations altogether. As it was, developing countries have had it both ways: they got to negotiate the international rules without having to acknowledge that those rules would ever apply to them.

Undoubtedly, most developing countries would have stayed out of the negotiations if participating meant eventually accepting mandatory emission limitations. Far from being a problem, however, this would have had two benefits. First, the Kyoto negotiations would have been more manageable, involving fewer countries and issues. They would not have been saddled with the baggage associated with UN negotiations, including rigid negotiating groups and a disproportionate influence for small countries. Second, the dynamic *vis-à-vis* developing countries might have been quite different. If industrialized countries had proceeded separately, at least some developing countries might have decided to accept emission targets in order to join the regime and sell their cheap emission reductions to Europe and the United States. In contrast to the Kyoto regime, which gives harder-line developing states such as China and India a veto, industrialized countries would have kept control of admissions. Indeed, over time, developing countries might have begun to clamor for acceptance into the "club" in order to get the benefits of emission trading. By starting small and building out over time, the climate change regime could have developed along the same lines as the GATT, with a comparatively small, like-minded group of states negotiating the initial rules, allowing others to join as they became willing to accept the obligations of membership.

Lesson 3: "America First"

IT IS ALMOST a commonplace that successful foreign policy must grow out of domestic political consensus. Certainly this is true in the United States with respect to environmental issues, where virtually every successful international regime has had its roots in U.S. domestic law. The most spectacular success—the Montreal ozone agreement—grew out of the U.S. regulation of chlorofluorocarbons, the chief culprit in the destruction of the ozone layer, beginning with a ban on aerosol spray cans in the late 1970s. Other relatively successful international regimes—for example to limit oil pollution from tankers, to regulate trade in endangered species, and to control dangerous pesticides and chemicals—also built on U.S. domestic efforts, rather than attempting to force the United States to change its ways through the pressure of an international regime.

From the beginning, however, U.S. climate change policy followed a different path, focusing on international rather than domestic measures. To some degree, this reflected the understandable reluctance of many governments to take domestic action without an assurance that others would follow suit. Given the global causes of climate change, if a country acts alone it simply drives up its own costs without making a meaningful dent in solving the problem. International action is necessary to make domestic climate policies effective.

To a greater degree, however, the

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international focus of U.S. climate policy reflected a lack of domestic political will. Although polls consistently indicate that Americans are concerned about climate change, climate change has until now never emerged as a major political issue in the United States.[6] Come election time, education, social security and taxes have taken precedence in voters' minds. Indeed, climate change usually does not even crack the top three environmental concerns—clean water, clean air and urban sprawl. As a result, climate activists have tended to view the international arena as a potentially more favorable forum.

The only real attempt to enact binding domestic measures related to climate change occurred early in the Clinton Administration, when Clinton proposed a broad-based energy tax (the so-called "BTU tax"[7]) as part of his first economic plan. Although Clinton billed the tax primarily as a revenue rather than a climate change measure and made it applicable to all energy sources, not just those that produce greenhouse gases, the tax would have discouraged greenhouse gas emissions by raising energy prices—and some climate change activists saw it in that light.[8] However, after a fierce lobbying campaign by business interests led Clinton to abandon the tax in June 1993, the administration became gun-shy about pushing for strong domestic measures and instead shifted its focus to the international negotiations. For the rest of his administration, Clinton's domestic climate change policy relied exclusively on voluntary programs—"no regrets" programs that are arguably in industry's self-interest because they reduce energy costs—the same approach as that of the first (and apparently the current) Bush Administration.

In part, the focus on the international negotiations was driven by the inexorable momentum of the international climate agenda itself, with major meetings practically every year, which kept climate change on the front burner. Ironically, these regular meetings—which are usually seen as a means of keeping pressure on states to act—helped give Clinton a comparatively easy way out politically. As the representative of the United States in international affairs, the administration could temporarily satisfy its environmental constituency by accepting strong international policies, without having to undertake the extremely difficult political work of convincing a conservative Congress to enact domestic legislation to reduce emissions. Of course, this approach could not work indefinitely, since international policies to combat global warming eventually require domestic implementation. But given the complexity and seemingly never-ending character of the negotiations, the international approach was able to buy considerable time for an administration reluctant to expend significant political capital at home to combat climate change. In doing so, administration officials could comfort themselves with the argument that they were making progress in the only way possible, by putting in place an international system that would be ready to use when America became serious about climate change (as they were sure would happen eventually).

Finally, the international focus of the Clinton Administration also reflected a political calculation that international commitments such as Kyoto could serve

[6]The one exception occurred during the 1988 presidential campaign, when climate change briefly erupted as an issue, leading President George H.W. Bush to vow that he would combat the greenhouse effect with the "White House effect."

[7]BTU stands for "British Thermal Units", which measures the heat content of fuels.

[8]At the level proposed by the President, the BTU tax would have reduced U.S. carbon emissions by about 17 million tons, or a little more than one percent.

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as a political lever to induce stronger domestic action. If the administration could somehow get the United States to join Kyoto, then the United States would no longer have any choice: it would have to reduce its emissions in order to satisfy its international commitments. In this way, Kyoto could provide the necessary push to overcome domestic political apathy regarding climate change.

This strategy, however, put the cart before the horse. If the United States lacks the political will to take significant domestic action, why would the Senate agree to a treaty requiring it to do so? The fallacy in attempting to use international commitments to induce domestic action is that international law itself depends on consent. International law does not impose requirements; it sets forth rules that states are free to accept or reject.

In other countries, international politics may in some cases drive domestic politics. Indeed, many countries in Europe and elsewhere see the international arena as a place to influence their own domestic agenda as well as to pressure others. Environmental ministries, in particular, have learned to use international processes as a way to achieve outcomes that other ministries might not otherwise support. But for the United States, domestic politics drives international politics, not vice versa. The United States is comparatively impervious to international pressure, and the system of separation of powers makes it difficult for an Executive Branch department or agency to use the international arena as a way to push Congress into domestic action. Even if the administration were willing to accept a treaty such as Kyoto, it must get the advice and consent of two-thirds of the Senate. As Kyoto illustrates, this is next to impossible in the absence of a strong domestic political consensus.

Of course, international negotiations can sometimes push the envelope outward at the margins; they need not always precisely mirror what has been agreed domestically. But they need a domestic foundation in order to get traction, and cannot get too far out in front of the domestic center of gravity. Kyoto violated both of these precepts and, as a result, was on life support domestically long before Bush pulled the plug.

In moving forward, climate change activists would do better to focus their efforts on building a domestic political consensus to reduce emissions rather than on the international negotiations. The current international backlash against Bush's repudiation of Kyoto has helped create new domestic momentum to address climate change. But ultimately the decision to limit U.S. emissions must come from within. Although there is much to criticize in the Bush Administration's handling of the climate change issue, one thing it got right was to focus initially, in the Cabinet review, on what the United States should do domestically to address the problem. Thus far, it has failed to articulate a credible approach, but, in the wake of Bush's repudiation of Kyoto, a serious debate has finally begun in Congress about how the United States should address climate change at home. If this results in domestic requirements to reduce emissions, even if only modestly, it would be a significant step forward.

Lesson 4: It's the Economy, Stupid

EMISSIONS TARGETS such as those contained in Kyoto commit countries to particular environmental results regardless of the economic costs. In the case of Kyoto, the costs for the United States would be highly uncertain (with estimates varying by a factor of ten). At the low end, Kyoto would add merely a few cents to a gallon of gasoline; at the high end, it would impose higher costs than the OPEC oil

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squeeze of the 1970s, which sent the U.S. economy into recession (and much of the rest of the world economy with it).

The Clinton Administration attempted to address the problem of cost by developing its own economic assessment of Kyoto, which, not surprisingly, found the costs to be quite low. But the administration's analysis was based on several unrealistic assumptions and, in any event, could not eliminate the uncertainty stemming from the existence of much higher cost estimates by other modelers.[9]

Given Clinton's mantra during his first campaign—it's the economy, stupid!—it is surprising that the Clinton Administration failed to endorse a proposal made by several economists prior to Kyoto that would have addressed the cost issue head on, by establishing a cap on how high carbon prices could go.[10] Under this approach, countries would agree in advance on a "safety valve" price. If emission reductions prove to be cheap, as many environmentalists believe, then the price of carbon would never reach the safety valve price and countries would simply meet their Kyoto targets. But if emissions prove expensive, as many conservatives argue, a country could issue additional permits at the safety valve price. The effect would be to ease the emission target in order to limit compliance costs and provide predictability. Through this mechanism, countries could decide how much they were willing to pay to combat climate change and set the safety-valve price accordingly, with a guarantee that they would not need to pay any more.

The safety valve proposal was known to Clinton Administration officials prior to Kyoto and received support from the President's economic team. Nevertheless, under pressure from environmentalists, the administration ultimately failed to endorse it. Last year, the proposal again received considerable attention both within the administration and internationally in the preparations for the conference at The Hague. Indeed, discussions with European and developing country negotiators suggested that it might have been negotiable as part of a package deal. Again, however, the administration declined to act, fearing a negative reaction from environmental groups immediately before the presidential election.

In developing an alternative to Kyoto, a safety valve approach would provide a convincing response to critics who contend that limiting emissions will prove to be very costly. In doing so, it would help defuse concerns about the economic risks of mandatory emission reductions and thus make a mandatory approach more politically viable.

What Next?

ALTHOUGH AN impressive achievement, Kyoto suffers from the sin of hubris. Whether or not the United States eventually negotiates some arrangement with the Kyoto system, it should consider a more modest, incremental approach to the problem. Rather than negotiate international commitments first and then seek domestic support, the United States should decide what it is willing to do domestically, and then examine ways that the international process can help support these efforts.

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[9]For example, the administration analysis assumed global emissions trading even though, under Kyoto, developing countries have no emissions targets and therefore no emission allowances to trade.

[10]See Raymond Kopp, Richard Morgenstern and William Pizer, "Something for Everyone: A Climate that Both Environmentalists and Industry Could Live With", *Resources for the Future* (September 29, 1997); and Warwick J. McKibbin and Peter J. Wilcoxen, "A Better Way to Slow Global Climate Change", *Brookings Policy Brief* (June 1997).

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A domestic climate policy could take several forms. Although economists tell us that a revenue-neutral carbon tax would probably be the most efficient policy instrument, it would violate the political orthodoxy of "no new taxes" and hence is probably a non-starter. A system of mandatory domestic targets and emissions trading (usually referred to as "cap and trade"), combined with a safety valve to limit the potential costs of compliance, is more viable politically. The level of initial effort could be comparatively modest. What is crucial is not so much the precise level of effort, which could be ratcheted up later if necessary, but a sound architecture that achieves significant buy-in from both industry and environmentalists and hence would not be subject to the vagaries of election cycles or media fads.

Whatever approach is selected, by beginning at the national level, the United States would retain control of its climate policy and be free to design an alternative system that could co-exist and compete with Kyoto. Such an approach would also help repair America's shattered credibility internationally.

International efforts should complement rather than attempt to coerce domestic action. The 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, to which the United States is a party, provides a solid base on which to build. Among other things, it requires countries to report regularly on their greenhouse gas emissions and on their policies to limit emissions, and establishes an international process to review these national reports. These reporting and review procedures help provide an information base that will be important regardless of what direction the international climate change regime may take. More immediately, they promote accountability by providing international scrutiny of domestic climate change measures.

Nevertheless, while the Framework Convention provides a useful infrastructure for international cooperation, the next step is not necessarily U.S. re-engagement in the Kyoto process. One alternative would be to begin with an agreement at the regional level or among like-minded states that would allow American firms to receive credit for emission reduction projects in other participating countries. Over time, as the Kyoto system gets underway and other countries develop their own national climate change programs, a system of mutual recognition could develop under which the United States, for purposes of emissions trading, would recognize other countries' emission allowances and vice versa. The system would grow from the bottom up, through an increasing integration of national climate programs. Eventually, developing countries might see the benefits of joining, since most can reduce emissions more cheaply than industrialized countries (due to the inefficiency of their energy systems), a comparative advantage that they could exploit through an international trading system.

We need to remember that we are dealing with a century-long problem, and that the level of emissions reductions we achieve in the short-term will have only a modest long-term impact. We should not delay—delay merely forecloses options and ultimately raises the overall costs of responding. But we can afford to proceed deliberately, learning from experience and recognizing that we are building an architecture for the long-term. To be effective, climate change policy need not be built in a day. □

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Realism about Russia

William E. Odom

REACTING TO THE Bush Administration's promise of "realism" in dealing with Russia, a former Clinton Administration official observed that "the issue is what is reality."[1] Indeed it is.

Clinton Administration officials had their reality: Russia was on the path to liberal democracy, albeit stumbling occasionally; it was building the institutions for an effective market economy, although suffering periodic setbacks; its large arsenal of nuclear weapons entitled it to major power status, but at the same time the United States could help to reduce significantly the number of operational Russian warheads and to improve the security of Russian nuclear weapons and materials. This assessment prompted the Clinton Administration to believe that Russia could be induced to play a constructive role in the Balkans, with NATO, in Iran, and elsewhere.

The Clinton reality also implied alternative futures, partly depending on U.S. policy choices. Although never voiced as an official view, defenders of the Clinton policy outside the administration emphasized that Russia's progress toward liberal democracy and economic recovery required constant U.S. support, both with technical assistance and by encouraging generous IMF and World Bank loans on relatively easy terms. If such support were not provided, it was intimated, a "red-brown" Russian dictatorship would emerge, analogous to Weimar Germany's transformation into Hitler's Third Reich. The assumption in either case was that Russia would soon return to the ranks of the great powers, and prudence dictated making an effort to avoid getting on Moscow's future enemy list. If one accepts this line of reasoning, then it can be claimed that the Clinton Administration's assistance programs to Russia made political sense despite their questionable economic results.

What different reality might the Bush Administration see if it takes an unvarnished view of contemporary Russian realities? It will see a Russia that has indeed become a "normal country", which is to say a member of that large majority of states in the world that are weak, poor, and ambling along their own paths headed nowhere in particular—certainly not to liberal democracy or effective market economies. It will also see that the security of Russia's nuclear arsenal is beyond significant U.S. influ-

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[1]Strobe Talbott, quoted in the *Washington Post*, March 23, 2001.

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ence but, nonetheless, that nuclear weapons do not make Russia a great power. It will see that Russia can engage in trouble-making diplomacy in the former Soviet republics along its periphery, but that it is not capable of major military operations.

More broadly, it will also see that Russia cannot be expected to act constructively in international affairs because most of its elite class angrily blames the West for Russia's drop to third rank status—although the real culprit is the legacy of seven decades of Soviet rule. Western magnanimity cannot change Russia's foreign policy behavior for the better; it is far more likely to make it worse. Moreover, Russia as a "normal country" in this special sense of the term may remain in a sharply reduced condition for a very long time. It is liable to become, in Jeffrey Tayler's colorful phrase, "Zaire with permafrost."[2]

What if we were reasonably certain that Russia will not soon return to great power status, either as a liberal democracy or a dictatorship? What if we knew that no amount of aid and assistance will produce a dynamic and effective Russian economy? What if, in other words, Russia simply cannot "make it", with Western help or without it? What is the evidence for this possibility, and what would be the implications for U.S. policy?

Russia's Institutional Deficit

FORMALLY speaking, of course, Russia is "making it" to democracy in the sense that it holds periodic elections in which opposition parties participate—as long as their chances of winning are scant. Russia has not yet, however, seen an incumbent president voted out of office. If "making it" means achieving "liberal" democracy, then evidence accumulates that Russia is not making it and may not do so for many decades.

Its formal democracy notwithstanding, Russia lacks genuine constitutionalism. A true constitutional system requires a durable elite consensus on: rules for making rules; rules for deciding who rules; and individual rights that no ruler can violate or abridge. Russia is developing no such consensus. President Vladimir Putin's carefully managed succession to President Boris Yeltsin made clear to all but the most obtuse observers that a genuine breakthrough for constitutionalism in Russia is not about to happen. Most of Putin's key programs—taking all effective political power away from the Federation Council (the upper chamber of the parliament); imposing a new administrative level over the regional governments; conducting a genocidal war in Chechnya; and methodically reducing media freedoms—appear to violate the Yeltsin constitution of 1993, calling to mind the Russian proverb that "paper will put up with anything written on it."

The unreconstructed optimist will object, insisting that all this signifies merely a temporary setback on a difficult road, a claim frequently made by Clinton Administration officials as well as numerous analysts and scholars in think tanks and universities. In truth, however, Russia is on some other road altogether, and this truth really should not surprise us.

If in 1992 one had taken the best theories available on how liberal democracies come to be, and what kind of state institutions are required for effective economic performance, one would have known that Russia's chances of taking the liberal path were poor. After a decade of post-Soviet experience, one should now conclude that the chances are trivial to none, barring a major dislocating shock

[2]Tayler, "Russia is Finished", *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 2001, p. 35.

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such as a major war or revolution, or the very improbable emergence of the kind of elite consensus that produced the Meiji restoration in Japan. Russia is now locked into a mix of old and new institutions that daily becomes more costly for the Russian elite to escape than to perpetuate. This predicament is neither unusual nor abnormal; most countries are trapped in the "weak state" syndrome and locked into economically ineffective institutions. *Abnormal* countries are the wealthy liberal democracies located almost exclusively in North America, western Europe, and a few rim-land states in Northeast Asia.

Political theory, and not just Russia's experience, supports these observations. It does so by clarifying the link between political institutions and economic performance.

Clearly, all liberal democracies have market economies where, despite sometimes large welfare programs, prices are set largely by supply and demand. But the reverse is not true; not all market economies exist within a liberal democracy. Indeed, the rim-land economies in Asia, some of their leaders have insisted, perform well precisely because they do *not* have liberal democratic governments. Thus, the connection between good economic performance and liberal political institutions has been a disputed one, and the mixed empirical evidence allows disparate views their day.

Mainstream Western economists have shed little empirical light on these disputes, preferring instead the many simplifying theoretical assumptions of neoclassical economics. This is why individual Western advisors to the Russian government in 1992–93, including officials of the IMF and World Bank, ignored such complications. Ironically, the winner of the Nobel Prize for economics in 1993, Douglass C. North, who had published the last of several books in 1990, confronted directly the question of the connection between political institutions and economic performance.[3] In his 1993 acceptance speech, he called attention to the relevance of his work for the Russian case—evidently in vain.

A few of this Nobel laureate's central ideas should have given pause to U.S. policymakers as well as to those economists advising Russia. First, North observed that if neo-classical economics could explain economic development, then all countries, whatever their level of development, would be moving on converging axes toward a common efficiency level. But, as North's research shows, they do not converge. The reason, he suggests, is that they have different institutions, and institutions greatly affect economic performance. Looking at the historical record, those institutions arising from the Glorious Revolution in 17th-century England—especially stable property rights and a judiciary largely independent of royal power—work best because they greatly lower transaction costs, facilitating profitable commerce and investment.

North stresses that effective "third-party enforcement" is critical for achieving sustained, long-term economic growth. In his words, "third-party

[3]North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Mancur Olson in *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982) also offers a structural explanation, based on neo-classical economic analysis, as to why economies rigidify and decline. But unlike North, he does not really deal with why some countries have sustained effective economic performance while others have not. In his posthumously published *Power and Prosperity* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), Olson took a much wider view of the role of institutions, but North provides the more comprehensive treatment.

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enforcement means the development of the state as a coercive force able to monitor property rights and enforce contracts effectively, but no one at this stage in our knowledge knows how to create such an entity."[4] This should have been a chastening observation for those Western advisors and policymakers who marched with such confidence to help Russia. Did they "know how to create such an entity"? These economists clearly did not, and as U.S. policymakers funded hundreds of technical assistance programs for implementing the rule of law, privatization, accounting methods, and so on, it soon became clear that neither did they.

Even as the importance of institutional reform began to dawn on many observers, certain critics of the Clinton Administration's policies insisted that there was a "better" or a "right" way to help Russia.[5] But they, too, failed to show how one can induce the Russian state to perform an effective "third-party enforcement" role. It is difficult to see how the key Western governments, even had they pursued some wiser set of aid policies, could have overcome Russia's political and economic development problems without an extremely intrusive overhaul of virtually the entire institutional structure of the Russian state.

This is not to say that there are no examples of U.S. policy producing effective "third-party enforcement" in other countries; there are, specifically, in Germany and Japan after World War II. The Marshall Plan itself did not cause this development in Germany. Rather, the U.S. military occupation government did. True enough, roots for an autonomous judiciary existed there and, to a lesser degree, in Japan, but it was the conscious use of a military occupation to sponsor precisely the institutional developments called for that explains the success. An effective Marshall Plan for Moscow, then, would have required a military occupation as well as hundreds of billions of dollars—and might still have failed, for Russia has no heritage of inchoate liberal institutional development toward effective constitutionalism that both Germany and Japan had achieved by the turn of the 20th century (or that the Baltic states and the countries of central Europe have today to one degree or another).

In the absence of a compelling refutation of North's interpretation of the historical evidence, we should recognize that no available U.S. policy can put Russia on the path to a liberal political system. Nor is North alone in suggesting such a conclusion. Political scientists have long noted the powerful role of political culture, a concept that embraces, among other things, what North calls "informal institutions" in a society. Robert Putnam has exposed centuries-old continuities of political culture that block the effective use of public funds in parts of Italy today.[6] Notwithstanding the "third wave" of new democracies since World War II, the number of truly liberal democracies—that is, those that have fully instituted a constitutional breakthrough, or have become what Robert Dahl calls "mature polyarchies"—has not grown much since 1945. By Dahl's count in 1989, Germany, Japan and Austria were the only new ones, solidly rooted through more than two decades of existence. Today he would add Spain and Portugal as third-decade democracies, and perhaps South Korea and Taiwan as

[4]North, p. 59.

[5]For perhaps the most egregious example, see Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000).

[6]Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

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second-decade candidates.[7] The special conditions that favor the emergence of liberal democracies exist in few places, meaning that the prospects for additional ones are not promising. Judged against Dahl's prerequisites, Russia would appear to have dismal prospects.

Russia's Path Dependence and the Weak State Syndrome

THOSE POOR prospects can be best described with the aid of North's concept of "path dependence." At its most basic, path dependence means that once a country has put in place a set of institutions—formal and informal—they are difficult to change. The origins of the "path dependence" idea are varied and old. Historians as well as political scientists have long noted the propensity of social and political arrangements to persist in countries, devising in some cases theories of historical continuities. Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis is a recent example of such an approach. In technology, the idea has acquired more specificity, of which the typewriter keyboard is one example. The "QWERTY" key layout was designed to slow down fast typists so that the keys did not pile up on early models. As mechanical designs improved and typewriters became capable of handling very high-speed typing, the less efficient keyboard layout was retained because the costs of retraining typists and buying replacement keyboards were judged too high. We are thus still "locked in" to the "QWERTY" layout, and similar "lock-ins" can be observed in other technologies.

North applies this concept to institutional development. When England broke out of its old institutional pattern based on absolute monarchy, it established a far more effective economic path, one that also took hold in Holland at about the same time. Meanwhile, France, Spain and other European countries remained on their old paths, chained to absolutist institutional arrangements that yielded far less effective economic performance. They remained locked in for a long time, trailing the booming English and Dutch economies for the next three centuries.

If we view Russia today through the "path dependence" concept, what do we see? First, the legacies of Soviet institutions—e.g., informal rules on property rights, on the place and purpose of courts and legal practices, taxation, accounting systems and others—remain strong. Second, in the absence of an effective "third-party enforcement" role by the state, alternative methods of enforcement have begun to take root. Contract disputes are more often settled informally despite the fact that new laws and legal remedies are formally available in the courts. Private security firms will readily handle such disputes, resorting to rough measures and even murder if necessary. Much of the old Soviet bureaucracy remains in place, allowing poorly paid civil servants to supplement their incomes through "rent seeking" and the misappropriation of state property and funds. Regional governors and mayors have many means for extracting wealth from their citizens, not as legitimate taxes but for lining their own pockets.

With every month that passes, the mix of Soviet and post-Soviet institutions becomes more costly to reverse. Several studies of the business "oligarchs" who gained enormous wealth during the Russian privatization process have noted that although the oligarchs initially supported reform, they began blocking fur-

[7] Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 312-17. By Dahl's criteria, new democracies need at least twenty years to qualify as "mature."

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ther reform once they themselves got rich.[8] They prefer the murky arrangements that made them wealthy to an environment of effective "third-party enforcement" by reasonably honest state officials. Thus they persist in asset stripping, moving capital abroad, and tax evasion, although such practices yield terrible economic consequences for the country as a whole.

Boris Yeltsin and many of his close supporters in the government came to share an interest in the status quo as they themselves learned to profit from it. Putin claims to be committed to reining in the oligarchs in order to break these perverse institutions, but will he create better institutions or merely displace the first generation of post-Soviet oligarchs with his own supporters? His primary bases of political support—the military and the intelligence services—would lose their strong claims on the state's resources if more effective institutions existed. This and other evidence has persuaded the Swedish economist, Stefan Hedlund, that a post-Soviet equilibrium has already been reached, signaling the virtual permanency of these institutions; i.e., a path-dependence lock-in has already occurred in Russia that promises very poor future economic performance.[9] To escape from it, Russia would have to experience powerful changes in the pay-off matrix that now exists for businessmen and state officials. A few top leaders alone are not likely to be able to change it, even if they wished to do so.

Two aspects of Russia's reality should now be clear. First, the country will not become a liberal democracy within the next several decades, maybe much longer. Second and concomitantly, the Russian economy will perform poorly for the indefinite future. Taken together, these judgments support a third one: Russia is now locked in the "weak state" syndrome.[10]

Weak states are best identified by the ineffectiveness of their tax systems. The cost of effective modern government is somewhere in the range of 20-30 percent of GDP, and most tax revenue must come from direct taxes. Direct taxes, however, are the most difficult to collect, requiring strong local government, communications, reliable local police and courts, and so on. An effective tax system is normally good evidence that the appropriate state structures and institutions exist and operate reasonably well. Because indirect taxes require less administrative capacity, and export-import taxes very little indeed beyond control of airports and seaports, they are less compelling measures of state strength. Finally, weak states tend to be directly in business; that is, they are "statist" states.

The clear majority of states in the world belong to the weak state category and, once in it, escape is the exception, not the rule. Military dictatorship is no salvation; on the contrary, praetorian regimes are almost always manifestations of the weak state syndrome. Many of President Putin's policies—"statism" in some parts of the economy, arbitrary use of violence and intimidation, as in Chechnya and against the media and the oligarchs, and changes in state organization by unconstitutional processes—stand as illustrations of Russia's status as a weak state. Worse, such policies will perpetuate Russia's "weak state" condition and perhaps weaken the country further.

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[8]See Joel Hellman, "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist Transitions", *World Politics* (January 1998).

[9]Hedlund, *Russia's "Market" Economy* (London: UCL Press, 1999).

[10]See Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), for descriptions of the weak state and explanations of its origins and persistence.

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Russian Reality and Russian International Behavior

A CONGENITALLY weak Russia is very unlikely to play a constructive role in international affairs. The Western goal of integrating Russia into the international economic and political mainstream is laudable, but will prove exceedingly difficult to achieve. The wounded pride of Russia's elite cannot be assuaged by restraint, such as no more NATO enlargement, or by inclusion in organizations like the G-7 or in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. Moscow is more likely to use such opportunities to cause trouble rather than to cooperate. Under the new code word for anti-Americanism, "multipolarity", Putin has focused most of his diplomatic attention on China, India, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. In other words, Moscow apparently seeks to lead those countries with poor economic performances and repressive social and political institutions, and at the same time to participate as a great power in Western international organizations. This is obviously a losing strategy. It cannot in this manner aggregate sufficient power to counterbalance the United States—its ostensible aim—but will certainly irritate Washington and most capitals in Europe.

Moreover, Russia simply does not have the political or military power to act constructively on a global scale. It is strong enough, however, to menace its weak and newly independent neighbors, and it manifests an increasing appetite for doing so. Some will object to this evaluation, citing Russia's nuclear weapons as the key to its strength. But that objection is both perverse in the kind of Russian behavior it encourages and dubious in the measure of power it imputes to nuclear weapons.

The perversity is that expressions of Western fear about nuclear weapons tempt Russian leaders to exaggerate their value and to charge a higher price for their own good behavior. The Nunn-Lugar monies have achieved some modest results, but they probably have also lined the pockets of military leaders, nuclear power officials and other bureaucrats. The Russian government simply lacks the administrative capacity to use those funds effectively and neither good intentions nor the use of Western firms under contract to dismantle the weapons can change this reality. Thus, the more Western leaders worry openly about Russia's nuclear weapons, the more Russian leaders are likely to fan public fears in the West as a way of securing access to funds that they can skim for personal gain.

Besides, Russia stands to lose as much from nuclear proliferation as the United States, more so in the cases of Iran, Iraq and North Korea. That the Russian government actually supports nuclear programs in some of these countries is evidence that it often cannot act even in its own national interest. This says very disturbing things about what one can expect any Russian government to do, even if it promises to be cooperative.

Nor do nuclear weapons really convey all that much power to their owners. The Russian military cannot invade Europe or South Korea or Japan with nuclear weapons alone. That would require a large offensive capability in conventional forces. Nor could nuclear weapons add much to a defense against a concerted Chinese invasion in the Far East. Nuclear weapons do nothing for Moscow in its war in Chechnya and its involvement in the periodic civil war in Tajikistan.

In today's strategic context, the coin of nuclear weapons has declined in an objective sense, but this new reality has yet to be fully recognized. The United States, therefore, is wise to accelerate that

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devaluation by simply treating these weapons as not all that important anymore. The administration is therefore quite right to want to extract the United States from the constraints that arms control treaties and the negotiating processes that achieve them impose against unilateral deep U.S. reductions and the restructuring of its arsenal. The record of nuclear arms control to date has mainly been to codify increases in weaponry or, at best, to drag out the time required to achieve reductions. Much can be said for making those reductions early rather than dawdling through another ten years of U.S.-Russian negotiations. If Russian leaders prefer to keep their large, aging and increasingly unreliable stockpile of nuclear warheads for years to come, let them.

The Weimar Analogy Myth

IF RUSSIA's nuclear arsenal is in truth a wasting asset, can Russia restore its conventional military power? Can it overcome its military weakness, as would be essential for the Weimar Germany analogy to make any sense? The answer is "no"; it cannot do so soon because the defense ministry effectively evaded systemic reform under Mikhail Gorbachev, successfully continued this strategy under Yeltsin, and appears to be following it against Putin, as well. The personal interests of senior military officers take priority over reversing the decline in Russian military power, something that would require large personnel reductions, particularly in the senior ranks, radical organizational change, and new relations with Russian defense industries. As long as the generals succeed in blocking reform, therefore, Russian conventional military forces will remain weak. The path-dependence phenomenon has a grip on the Russian military just as it does on the Russian economy and political system.

What if systemic military reform is nevertheless successfully imposed from above? Russian military power will still remain greatly constrained, first by the country's weak economy and second by adverse demographic and health trends. Russia is not Weimar Germany, with a healthy, young, expanding population. It does not have a world-class industrial economy that has competed effectively in global markets, as Germany did. It lacks a proud, unified and professionally competent officer corps, as the Reichswehr had. A strong Russian military, rising phoenix-like from the ashes of the Soviet collapse, is improbable. Still, a modest increase in military capabilities is possible—enough to pose a menace to those CIS countries that resist Moscow's dictates.

What, then, are we to make of the apparent increases in the Russian GDP over the past year? Is the economy truly recovering, as senior Russian officials claim and as some Western observers believe?

In the first place, all measurements of the Russian GDP are suspect. Russian officials have repeatedly and skillfully manipulated GDP figures to please the IMF. But they have done this so often that it is now doubtful that they themselves know which figures are accurate. Second, sharp reductions in imports of Western consumer goods after the 1998 financial crisis undoubtedly boosted domestic production in some sectors, but it did not lower transaction costs or improve factor productivity across the board—the real keys to economic growth. Meanwhile, commodity exports, especially oil at rising world prices, have brought more Western currency into Russian coffers, but this may only be temporary, and probably harms Russian institutional development. Countries living on oil export revenue, such as Nigeria, Venezuela and others, are notoriously poor at tax collection and

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mired in official corruption—key symptoms of the weak state syndrome. The present oil boom, therefore, is double-edged for Russia as well as for the other CIS oil-producing states, both a boon and a menace.

Moreover, the apparent good news on the Russian economy is in fact mixed. The Russian State Statistics Committee calculated capital flight for the first quarter of 2001 to exceed foreign direct investment by about $400 million. That means that for every foreign dollar coming in, more than one dollar flees the country—not a good sign for growth. Moreover, most foreign investment comes from Cyprus and the Netherlands, favorite places for Russians to hide their capital abroad.[11] In other words, most of the money coming in is not really foreign investment, but recycled plunder from oligarchs and others. Western investors actually provide only a tiny fraction of the capital coming into Russia, hardly a vote of confidence in the Russian economy. Finally, President Putin's economic advisor, Andrei Illarionov, has consistently warned that the failure of institutional reforms portends economic stagnation, and that growth in 2001 is likely to be close to zero. Optimistic reports on Russian economic performance, therefore, should be taken with a heavy dose of skepticism.

RUSSIA IS no longer a great power and is unlikely again to become one over the next several decades. Treating it like one is neither in Russia's interests nor the West's. It increases Moscow's incentives for restoring a repressive regime, for abolishing the modest gains Russians have made in human rights, and for squandering resources on mischief-making in the international arena. Those Western enthusiasts for continuing to treat Russia as a great power are harming the very Russian citizens they claim to admire and desire to help. Ten years of Western policies based on that assumption, among others, have now disillusioned a large part of the otherwise pro-Western Russian intelligentsia. Well-meant financial largess is now widely seen as a CIA-directed scheme to weaken Russia. Creating a special arrangement for Moscow with NATO has given the Russian defense ministry one more lever for pumping up anti-American popular sentiment.

Many Russian scholars, journalists, and intellectuals clearly see the perversity of the present situation. The human rights activist, Sergei Kovalev, has explained how Putin successfully misled the Russian intelligentsia to support the war against the Chechens, a war that Elena Bonner has called "*de facto* genocide."[12] Mincing no words about the policies of the present Russian regime, she sounded like her famous husband, Andrei Sakharov, condemning the Brezhnev regime in the 1970s. Grigorii Yavlinskii, one of the few liberal politicians who survives in the present parliament, describes Russia's regime as a "pretend democracy" and warns that it is an illusion to believe, as some Russians do, that the West will not allow a return to dictatorship in Russia or its continued economic and social decline.[13] Putin's *de facto* censorship policies, however, are slowly reducing the number of Russian leaders who speak candidly on political issues. Anyone in the West truly wanting to know "what is reality" in Russia could do worse than listen to such voices—while they last.

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[11]Robert Cottrell, *Financial Times*, June 8, 2001.

[12]Kovalev, "Putin's War", *New York Review of Books*, February 10, 2000; and Bonner, "The Remains of Totalitarianism", *New York Review of Books*, March 8, 2001.

[13]Yavlinskii, "Vremya nazad", *Obshchaya gazeta*, February 14, 2001.

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Still Living with a Sick Bear

MANY YEARS ago in these pages, Henry S. Rowen wrote about the challenge for U.S. policy of "living with a sick bear."[14] Rowen's was perhaps the first crystallized argument that weakness emanating from Moscow could come to occupy U.S. concerns as much as or more than Russia's strength. As it has turned out, a more or less permanently weak and trouble-making Russia is still a serious problem for U.S. foreign policy, but it is no longer a first-order strategic challenge. Other problems greatly transcend it: maintaining Western security alliances; managing international economic institutions; global pollution and other environmental issues; and preventing eastern Europe from lapsing into economic and political crisis. While Russia remains important, it is not all that important.

Adapting U.S. policy accordingly does not mean slamming the door on Russia, but it does suggest fewer U.S. efforts to shape Russian domestic developments through economic and technical assistance programs. It also requires candor about human rights and anti-liberal behavior by the Russian state. But the major change should come in how the United States treats Russia in the international arena. U.S. policy toward Russia should depend largely on whether Russia pursues a constructive foreign policy rather than one that engages in posturing and trouble-making diplomacy. If it chooses the latter, Russia would be slamming the door on itself.

One may anticipate an objection to this approach. It may be so that Russia is weak, but would it not be wiser to treat Russia as a great power than as a marginal one, lest we feed its resentment and be surprised by its still possible return to great power status? In light of the record of the past decade, the question is better put the other way around: Is it not wiser to end the pretense about Russia's status today even if we believed that it would return to great power status tomorrow? A decade of experience of including Russia in the circle of major powers has not been rewarding. Nor has it brought increasingly favorable Russian sentiments toward the United States—which is really no surprise, for the record of countries rewarding their former enemies for benevolent treatment is not good.

Even some observers who share the assessment of Russia presented here may fear that it is too harsh to present openly, too discouraging for the Russians to hear. They may worry that it will cause them to give up hope, to believe that they are permanently excluded from the West, and to behave even worse in the international arena than they otherwise might. But progress in relations between Russia and the West cannot be built on falsehoods and pretenses. It has to rest on genuine mutual understanding. One imperative understanding is that seven decades of Soviet rule are mostly to blame for Russia's present predicament, not the West. And escaping that predicament requires facing the facts, not pretending that things are otherwise by restoring the Soviet national anthem, insisting that the Baltic states voluntarily joined the Soviet Union in 1940, stirring nostalgia for the Soviet Union, and failing to purge the old *nomenklatura* and its KGB associates. Germany—the Western part, at any rate—was quickly and successfully reintegrated into the international order after 1945 because it faced the facts, not because the United States refrained from publicly acknowledging the truth about German fascism and its crimes.

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[14]Rowen, "Living with a Sick Bear", *The National Interest* (Winter 1985/1986).

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Still others may object that the case made here is too fatalistic. Admittedly it has a strongly deterministic character. Yet it does not entirely rule out a role for political voluntarism of the sort that Yavlinskii and a few others have urged Russian leaders to exercise. Rather, it explains what these leaders are up against and how poor the odds are that they can quickly produce a significantly different outcome. Russian leaders may eventually find a way to escape their institutional path, and to alter it significantly for the better. Political leaders have broken their countries from path dependence in a few cases. But if it happens in Russia, as it did in Meiji Japan and Kemalist Turkey, it will be a homegrown affair, not one induced by Western ventriloquy, largess, pretenses and toleration of international mischief-making. It is more likely to happen earlier, moreover, if the United States insists on building its relations with Russia on the uncomfortable realities of the present day. In the meantime, the West can help marginally by keeping Russia's international role to a level commensurate with its power; to do otherwise would be to reinforce Russia's perverse path dependencies. □

The Oracle Speaks

The most important promoter of the RMA in America has been Andrew W. Marshall, the head of the Pentagon's obscure Office of Net Assessment, a cult figure in his own right, and one of the most curious and interesting figures in the defense world. . . .

Marshall, a small, bald man with wire-rimmed spectacles who dresses in the manner of an unreconstructed nineteen-fifties organization man, has a peculiarly strong mystique. For a defense intellectual, he hasn't published much, and in public settings he doesn't say much, either, often mumbling in a low voice, or questioning but not answering, or simply saying he has nothing to add to the discussion.

—Nicholas Lemann, *The New Yorker*, July 16, 2001

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We are in some danger . . . of forgetting just how divided and contentious informed opinion was on how to deal with the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, we do not yet have an adequate analytical history of the period from 1945 to 1991 that describes the alternative views of containment, the balancing of risks and ambitious goals, and the uncertainties with regard to the nature, strengths and weaknesses of the opponent. Such a history is needed to straighten out the facts and depict clearly the opposing viewpoints, especially as they emerged after the early 1960s. It would provide an overview of the changes in emphasis and direction of U.S. policy that took place during the whole of the Cold War.

—Andrew W. Marshall, *The National Interest*, Winter 2000/2001

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The Stability of Deterrence in the Taiwan Strait

Robert S. Ross

THE CASE can and has been made that the foreign policy of the Bush Administration differs little from that of its predecessor. Only the rhetoric has changed, it has been claimed, and even some of that is falling back into old patterns—with regard to North Korea, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and what to do about Ba'athi Iraq.[1] Remaining differences of rhetoric, it is said, mask essential continuity. The Bush Administration carries a more unilateralist tone over a range of issues—the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court, proposals to verify the 1972 Biological Weapons Treaty and control the flow of small arms—but it is not clear that the Clinton Administration was really more eager to press ahead on such matters, or that a Gore Administration would have been. Even on missile defense and the ABM treaty, the differences between Clinton and Bush may end up being quite minor when all is said and done.

One could argue the general case for the persistence of policy either way, but in one specific area there is a clear difference, and not just a rhetorical one. It concerns policy toward China.

When President Bush took office, he telephoned every major world leader but Chinese President Jiang Zemin. The Bush Administration then reportedly set about revising the SIOP (Strategic Integrated Operating Plan) to target more U.S. nuclear missiles against China. It has given serious consideration to prioritizing preparation for conventional war in East Asia against China and has promoted enhanced strategic cooperation with India and Japan. It has encouraged Japan to loosen its restraints on a more active regional military presence and it has proposed development with U.S. allies South Korea, Japan and Australia of a "regional" dialogue. It has also stressed cooperation with Russia on missile defense seemingly at the expense of China. It has defined the "no foreign-made products" stricture for the U.S. military to mean essentially no Chinese-made products and curtailed Pentagon contacts with the Chinese military. It has reversed a twenty-year U.S. policy by agreeing to sell submarines to Taiwan. It has also allowed high-profile visits to the United States by Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian and the Dalai Lama. Withal, the administration has not

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[1]Andrew J. Bacevich, "Different Drummers, Same Drum", *The National Interest* (Summer 2001).

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appointed a specialist on China to any senior position in the government.

Such a confrontational posture toward China cannot be explained as a response to the downing of a U.S. EP-3 surveillance plane and the detention of its crew for eleven days. The trend predates the incident and, despite Secretary of State Colin Powell's constructive visit to Beijing in July, has continued since. Rather, the explanation seems to lie in the administration's sympathy for Taiwan, its dour assessment of Chinese intentions and the prospect, in its view, of heightened instability in the Taiwan Strait. There is more than just talk going on: the administration is pursuing broad coordination with Taiwan's military to enable cooperation in a possible war with China, that coordination being an objective of many Republican defense and foreign policy specialists and members of Congress since 1996.

This is a well-intended but misguided effort. Such cooperation will not make Taiwan more secure, the United States more effective militarily or the deterrence of war more assured. Should the Bush Administration nevertheless continue this policy, it will eventually elicit mainland opposition because it threatens to reverse the essence of the post-1979 U.S.-China strategic understanding on Taiwan. It is worth emphasizing the core of that understanding from the Chinese point of view, to which many American analysts have somehow become oblivious.

From the days of the Korean War until 1979, Taiwan loomed in Beijing's eyes as a kind of American "Cuba." In other words, Beijing believed that the U.S. presence on Taiwan enabled the United States to threaten China's borders directly, just as the United States believed that the Soviet presence in Cuba threatened U.S. security from the early 1960s to the end of the Cold War. Indeed, in 1954 Washington and Taipei signed the U.S.-Republic of China Mutual Defense Treaty, which led to the U.S. deployment of advanced aircraft and nuclear-capable missiles on the island. But in 1979, when Washington normalized diplomatic relations with Beijing, it agreed to terminate the 1954 treaty with Taiwan and to withdraw its military presence from the island, thus satisfying China's demand that the United States cease using Taiwan to threaten Chinese security.

If Chinese leaders believe, in their bedrock strategic realism, that the United States is out to reverse the 1979 understanding, they have a full menu of riposte at their disposal. They can engage in nerve-wracking saber-rattling in the Taiwan Strait in order to heighten regional tension and political and economic instability on Taiwan. They can reduce cooperation on the Korean peninsula and renew missile proliferation to Pakistan and the Middle East. They can also impose costly sanctions against major U.S. export industries dependent on the Chinese market, such as Boeing.

In the face of such potential trouble, the Bush Administration seems to believe that if it firmly wields U.S. power, it can command Chinese accommodation to U.S. policy initiatives. But this repeats the old mistakes of several new entrants to the White House. The Carter, Reagan and Clinton Administrations (but *not* the first Bush Administration) each made the same error and encountered a level of Chinese resistance that required them to move back to the policy of their predecessors. Each discovered, too, that their predecessor's policy was compatible with U.S. interests in both defending Taiwan and cooperating with China.

The Bush Administration should maintain essential policy continuity with its predecessors simply because there is no good reason for any other course. There is, in effect, a firm triangle of mili-

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tary deterrence and political dissuasion at work: China is deterred from the use of force against Taiwan so long as American power and interests are engaged there and Taiwan does not declare independence; Taiwan is deterred from declaring independence due to credible Chinese threats to use limited but politically significant force in the face of any such declaration; and the United States is—or *ought* to be—dissuaded from tampering with this situation because it enables Washington to defend Taiwan, deal with China as necessary and prudent on a range of issues, and minimize the possibility of war through miscalculation. Moreover, the effective deterrence and mutual interests in stability that are characteristic of this triangle are conditions bound to last well into the 21st century.

Why China Wants Peace with Taiwan

CHINA HAS three sets of interests in Taiwan—concerning security, nationalism and domestic politics—each of which provides a powerful incentive for Chinese leaders to exercise influence over the Taiwan issue. Together, these interests ensure that the mainland would be prepared to use force to reverse seriously unwelcome trends in Taiwan's international role.

China's security interest in the Taiwan issue reflects the concern of all states for secure borders. Located eighty miles from the Chinese coast, Taiwan's enduring strategic importance to China is obvious. Should any great power establish a strategic presence on Taiwan, it could use the island to challenge Chinese coastal security. This is not just a theoretical matter as far as the Chinese leadership is concerned. Japan occupied Taiwan (then called Formosa in the English-speaking world) from 1895 until 1945. The United States was ensconced militarily on Taiwan from at least 1954 until the U.S.-China agreement to normalize diplomatic relations in January 1979.

Since 1979 the United States has continued to sell advanced weaponry to Taiwan, but this commercial relationship has not enabled the U.S. military to use the island to challenge directly Chinese security. China opposes these sales, but its key strategic interest—excluding a great power strategic presence on Taiwan—is now satisfied by the status quo, thus minimizing its strategic interest in war.

Chinese nationalism demands that both the international community and Taiwan acknowledge that Taiwan is part of China, and therefore that it not declare sovereign status in international politics. While this demand is longstanding, it has taken on added energy in recent years as the domestic political significance of Chinese nationalism has grown. Now that the Chinese Communist Party leadership no longer enjoys ideological legitimacy, is infamous for corruption, represses dissent, and cannot ensure economic stability for much of its population, it depends on its nationalist credentials for political ballast. Taiwan's declaration of independence would challenge party legitimacy, especially since it would be interpreted as U.S. "imperialist" intervention in Chinese domestic affairs.

The combination of China's strategic, nationalist and political imperatives creates the latent instability associated with the Taiwan issue. Should Taiwan declare independence, the mainland would most likely use force and possibly go to war to compel Taiwan to reverse its position. This seemed increasingly likely during the 1990s, when Lee Teng-hui, Taiwan's first democratically elected leader, moved Taiwan toward a declaration of independence. His July 1999 announcement of Taiwan's "special state-to-state" relationship with the mainland came close to crossing the line of a declaration of sovereignty, but it did not. Since then, despite

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the election in March 2000 of the pro-independence candidate Chen Shui-bian, Taiwan has retreated from Lee's provocative stance. In his May 20, 2000 inauguration speech, Chen declared that Taiwan would not declare independence, would not change Taiwan's constitution to incorporate the "state-to-state" formulation, would not change the name of Taiwan, and would not hold a popular referendum on Taiwan's international status. He has not reversed this policy, so that mainland interest in continued recognition by Taiwan that it is part of China is met.

China will not forsake its demand for unification, but because its foremost strategic and nationalistic objectives are met, this is no more than a demand for face. Thus, in the absence of Taiwan's declaration of independence China can be deterred from using force. Taiwan's purchase of 150 F-16s and 60 Mirage 2000 jets and its domestic production of the Chingkuo fighter nearly guarantee it air superiority over the Taiwan Strait, denying the mainland the ability to sustain offensive operations against it. The mainland still lacks the amphibious capabilities required to occupy Taiwan against the island's coastal defenses. Taiwan's assets alone could enable it to frustrate a mainland effort to occupy the island.[2] But deterrence of a more limited but nonetheless punishing and coercive mainland use of force depends on Taiwan's longstanding strategic relationship with the United States.

The United States can inflict a rapid and punishing attack against Chinese forces while emerging from war with minimal casualties. Despite recent acquisitions of Russian military aircraft, destroyers and submarines, China's air force and navy are dominated by 1960s generation hardware. Although China has already received approximately 75 Russian Su-27 fighter jets and has agreed to purchase Su-30 ground attack aircraft, the PLA's difficulty in operating and maintaining Russian jets diminishes their role in the cross-strait balance of power. The Russian Sovremmny-class destroyer is a highly capable vessel, especially when equipped with Russian Sunburn missiles, but China cannot defend the Sovremmny, and its limited stand-off range poses only a minimal threat to U.S. forces. The Russian Kilo-class attack submarine is a very capable submarine, but it is also very complex and difficult to operate.

China's military also lacks sophisticated information technologies. It possesses minimal beyond-visual-range targeting. In December 1995 China did not discover that the U.S. aircraft carrier *Nimitz* was transiting the Taiwan Strait, and in March 1996 it could not locate the U.S. carrier *Independence* when it deployed 200 miles from China's coast. China's theater missiles lack terminal guidance systems and thus cannot hit moving targets beyond visual range, including U.S. warships. Although China has been modernizing its information technologies, in the eight years between the Gulf War and the war in Kosovo the technology gap between China and the United States widened, thus increasing China's vulnerability to U.S. forces.

Chinese officers are mindful of their military deficiencies. Their studies of the Gulf War and the war in Yugoslavia underscore the U.S. ability to use naval superiority and conventional high-technology, precision-guided weapons to deter coastal adversaries and inflict devastating damage from off-shore platforms.[3] PLA researchers and the high command under-

[2]See Michael O'Hanlon, "Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan", *International Security* (Fall 2000).

[3]See, for example, Liu Yijian, *Zhi Haiquan yu Haijun Zhanlue* ("Command of the sea and strategic employment of naval forces") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 2000), pp. 103, 120–1, 144–5, 147–9.

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stand that in decisive information technologies China is woefully backward and that its inferiority will persist well into the 21st century. There is no false optimism in the PLA that it could survive a war with the United States.[4]

Military defeat by the United States would not only weaken China *vis-à-vis* the United States but would also dramatically reverse China's position in the regional balance of power. China would lose its current advantages with regard to Russia, with implications for border security in Central Asia and Northeast Asia. Similarly, Japanese and Indian power would pose greater challenges to Chinese security in the aftermath of a U.S.-China conflict. A weakened China might also face security challenges from foreign-supported disaffected minorities on its borders and Tibetan independence activists. Indeed, Chinese territorial integrity depends on its avoiding war with the United States.

The strategic costs to China of a war with the United States are only part of the deterrence equation. China also possesses vital economic interests in stable relations with the United States. War would end China's quest for modernization by severely constraining its access to U.S. markets, capital and technology, and by requiring China to place its economy on permanent war-time footing. The resultant economic reversal would derail China's quest for "comprehensive national power" and great power status. Serious economic instability would also destabilize China's political system on account of the resulting unemployment in key sectors of the economy and the breakdown of social order. Both would probably impose insurmountable challenges to party leadership. Moreover, defeat in a war with the United States over Taiwan would impose devastating nationalist humiliation on the Chinese Communist Party. In all, the survival of the party depends on preventing a Sino-American war.

But sure knowledge of defeat in war will not deter Chinese leaders from attacking Taiwan unless they are convinced that the United States will in fact intervene. Is the United States credible? The short answer is "yes." Chinese government analysts understand that domestic politics contributes to the likelihood of U.S. intervention, and domestic political opposition toward China and political support for Taiwan in the United States have not been higher since the late 1960s. Moreover, the post-Cold War increases in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan have strengthened the U.S. commitment to defend the island. Chinese leaders also acknowledge that the March 1996 deployment of two U.S. aircraft carriers near Taiwan strongly coupled the U.S. commitment to Taiwan with its commitment to its allies in East Asia. Since then, Chinese leaders have assumed that a war with Taiwan means a war with the United States.[5]

PLA assessments of U.S. military capabilities also contribute to the credibility of U.S. deterrence. Some blustering Chinese PLA authors take heart in the

[4]Zhang Wannian, *Dangdai Shijie Junshi yu Zhongguo Guofang* ("Contemporary world military affairs and Chinese national defense") (Beijing: Junshi Kexue Chubanshe, 1999), pp. 150–1. Also see Zhu Xiaoli, *Junshi Geming Wenti de Yanjiu* ("A study on the revolution in military affairs") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 2000), pp. 171–8, 185–91.

[5]Shi Yinhong, "Meiguo dui Hua Zhengce he Taiwan Wenti de Weilai" ("U.S. policy toward China and the future of the Taiwan issue"), *Zhanlue yu Guanli* ("Strategy and management"), No. 6 (2000); Ye Zicheng, "Zhan yu He, Jiaogei Taiwan Dangju Xuan" ("War and peace, give the choice to the Taiwan authorities"), *Huanqiu Shibao*, October 22, 1999; author's interviews with Chinese government policy analysts.

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reputed U.S. inability to suffer casualties and argue that China can risk the use of force against Taiwan because it can abort U.S. intervention by sinking a destroyer, for example. Such bluster sells many books in China, but it does not reflect mainstream PLA analysis. Chinese military leaders have criticized these ultra-nationalistic authors and their unrealistic analyses. Faced with the prospect of war with a superior power, professional PLA analysts do study asymmetric warfare. But their writings suggest that the potential value of such strategies is in enhancing China's ability to cope with war against a superior force once fighting begins, not in giving China a deterrent capability against the United States and thus the confidence to risk war with Taiwan.

Moreover, PLA analysts emphasize the critical importance of superior warfighting capabilities in making deterrence threats credible. Indeed, they do not discuss asymmetric warfare against an adversary possessing vastly superior C4I technologies, wartime implementation of asymmetric strategies, and the risk of eliciting overwhelming retaliatory strikes and rapid defeat should deterrence fail. In order to deter, it is necessary to be able to win, not merely to sink a single ship. In this context, the PLA also understands that the United States possesses overwhelming "escalation dominance", so that China lacks the capability to deter U.S. escalation at any level of conflict.[6]

At the highest level, too, China's limited strategic nuclear capability provides little comfort to Chinese planners. U.S. escalation dominance puts the onus of initiating a nuclear war on China, which would subject it to devastating U.S. nuclear retaliation. But Chinese military leaders have little confidence that China can even launch a nuclear first strike against the United States. China's military literature dwells on the vulnerability of the PLA's few long-range missiles, reflecting concern that the long and overt preparation time prior to launch would elicit a preemptive U.S. attack. China thus lacks confidence that it can use the threat of a nuclear attack to deter U.S. intervention.[7] Also, because U.S. deterrence of China relies on conventional weapons rather than on nuclear forces, the PLA's strategic analysts argue that it is far more credible than U.S. Cold War deterrence of the Soviet Union.[8]

There can never be total confidence that deterrence will work. Yet U.S. deterrence of any actual Chinese use of force against Taiwan—outside of a Taiwan declaration of independence—is highly stable. Overwhelming U.S. superiority means that the strategic, economic and political costs to China of U.S. military intervention would be astronomical. U.S. conventional superiority and its strong political commitment to Taiwan mean that the credibility of the U.S. threat to intervene is very high. In an insecure world, the U.S. deterrent posture in the Taiwan Strait is an unusually secure one.

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[6]Jiang Leizhu, *Xiandai yi Lie Sheng You Zhanlue* ("Modern strategy of pitting the inferior against the superior") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 1997), pp. 180–92; Chen Zhou, *Xiandai Jubu Zhanzheng Lilun Yanjiu* ("A study of modern local war theories") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 1997), pp. 149–56.

[7]Wang Houqing and Zhang Xingye, eds., *Zhanyi Xue* ("Science of campaigns") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 2000), pp. 162, 168–72.

[8]Yao Yunzhu, *Zhanhou Meiguo Weishe Lilun yu Zhengce* ("Postwar U.S. deterrence theory and policy") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 1998), pp. 162, 168–72; Wang Qiming and Chen Feng, *Daying Gaojishu Jubu Zhanzheng: Junguan Bixu Shouce* ("Winning high-technology local war: A handbook of required readings for military officials") (Beijing: Military Friendship Literature Press, 1997), pp. 405–7.

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Why Taiwan Will Not Declare Independence

WHILE the United States deters China from using force so long as Taiwan does not declare independence, China deters Taiwan from declaring independence. Thus, following Lee Teng-hui's 1995 visit to the United States and the simultaneous increased momentum of Taiwan's independence movement, the mainland increased the deployment of M-9/DF-15 surface-to-surface missiles in Fujian province. The M-9 lacks terminal guidance capabilities and, thus, precision targeting, as well as significant destructive capability. Nonetheless, it can create havoc in Taiwan's economic and political systems. Mainland military writings emphasize the deterrent role of random missile attacks against a shifting selection of targets on Taiwan.[9] And there is no defense against Chinese missiles, for an effective missile defense capability is many years off. Moreover, even should such technology be deployed, Chinese deployment of additional missiles could saturate and overwhelm it.

China plans a similar deterrent role for its conventional military forces. The mainland does not need to be able to carry out a strategically effective air assault or a tight naval blockade against Taiwan for the threat of such actions to deter Taiwanese political ambition. Chinese leaders understand that such actions can have a devastating psychological effect on Taiwan's economy and undermine the island's relations with its major trading partners. The mere threat to use them against a declaration of independence, bolstered by large-scale military exercises and deployment, is therefore a powerful deterrent, and low-level wartime implementation could coerce Taiwan to accept early defeat.[10]

Complementing China's missile deployments and its limited air and naval capabilities is the credibility of its threats. Taiwan's leadership knows that China's failure to respond to a declaration of independence would challenge its international reputation, affecting border security and independence movements around its periphery. In March 1996, despite the risk of U.S. intervention, the PLA launched M-9 missiles into coastal waters within the vicinity of Kaohsiung, Taiwan's major port city, to underscore its will to oppose moves toward independence. These actions were very risky, but they enhanced China's credibility in using force to oppose Taiwan's independence.

Taiwan's interest in preserving the political status quo reflects more than PRC military deterrence. Taiwan's economic prosperity depends increasingly on cross-strait stability. As China's economy has continued to grow and Taiwan's labor costs have increased, Taiwan's economy has become more integrated into the Chinese economy. Its high-technology industries have begun to move offshore to China, so that its export-led economy and future economic growth are increasingly dependent on a stable political relationship with the mainland. Moreover, since late 2000 Taiwan has experienced a significant economic downturn. Unemployment is higher than ever before, the stock market has lost nearly 50 percent of its value, and the New Taiwan dollar reached a 32-month low in early June. The result of Chinese growth and Taiwan's relative decline is that business confidence on Taiwan has

[9]Wang and Zhang, eds., *Zhanyi Xue*, pp. 252–3.

[10]Wang and Zhang, eds., *Zhanyi Xue*, pp. 409–10; Wang Wenrong, *Zhanlue Xue* ("Science of strategy") (Beijing: National Defense University Press, 1999), pp. 252–3.

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reached a five-year low and business elites increasingly recognize China as their long-term hope for continued profits. Consequently, Taiwan's business elite pressures political leaders to keep relations with China becalmed. As these trends continue, especially after Taiwan and China enter the World Trade Organization, Taiwan's ongoing incorporation into the mainland economy and its economic dependence on it will discourage provocations from Taipei.

Taiwan also has critical political stakes in cross-strait stability. Its democracy is young and fragile and has yet to develop a tradition of cooperation across party lines. Its society continues to suffer from a deep fissure reflecting conflict between those born on the mainland and arrived after 1945 and those born in Taiwan. This fissure has contributed to intense partisan politics which, in turn, have undermined Chen Shui-bian's ability to develop a coherent economic recovery policy. They have also undermined voter confidence in Taiwan's ability to contend with mainland pressure.[11] It is far from clear, therefore, that Taiwan's democracy could long survive intensified mainland-Taiwan conflict.

Taiwan clearly retains an ambition for sovereignty and the associated membership in the United Nations and other international organizations. But, similar to Beijing's demand for unification, this is a demand for face, not a vital interest. U.S. intervention could defeat a Chinese offensive, but Taiwan would nonetheless lose all that is worth defending—its very impressive strategic, economic and political successes. Taiwan's satisfaction with a very favorable status quo and the great risk in challenging Chinese interests combine virtually to guarantee that there will be no declaration of independence—and this is not to speak of U.S. opposition to such an initiative. This reality is reflected in both Taiwan's public opinion polls and in the outcome of the 2000 presidential campaign. Since 1997, support for independence has never exceeded ten percent in government-sponsored opinion polls; the norm is less than six percent. Thus, pro-independence candidates risk appearing reckless should they call for a declaration of independence. Although Chen Shui-bian won the 2000 presidential campaign, he was the beneficiary of a three-way race in which the candidates opposed to independence divided the anti-Chen vote. That he polled less than 40 percent of the vote reflected in part voter apprehension over his prior support for independence.

Beijing's interest in Taiwan's continued formal acceptance that it is part of China is therefore not as much at risk today as seemed to be the case two or three years ago. For the first time in many years, it is confident that "time is on China's side." This is reflected in reduced expectations that China will have to go to war to arrest a trend toward Taiwan independence. Indeed, China has retreated from the February 2000 Taiwan White Paper threat to use force if Taiwan resists unification negotiations "indefinitely." Foreign ministry officials no longer raise this condition; when pressed, they respond that "indefinitely" is a "long time." Thus, while China is deterred from initiating a major war, Taiwan is deterred from doing that which would elicit China's use of force in the first place.

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[11] See the line chart of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Committee on polling from February 1997 to March 2001, *New York Times*, July 8, 2001; *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 12, 2001, p. 48, and August 2, 2001, pp. 19–21.

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The U.S. Stake

THE U.S. AIM in cross-strait relations ought to be to reinforce these offsetting strictures and to make sure that its well-intended efforts to prepare for war do not destabilize a constructive status quo and unnecessarily set back U.S.-China relations. This should not be too difficult.

One advantage in achieving this aim is the fact that the United States does not possess inherently vital security or political interests in Taiwan's strategic role in international politics. U.S. security would not be affected by either China's unification or Taiwan's independence. Thus, every U.S. administration since that of Richard Nixon has declared that the United States does not favor any particular outcome of the mainland-Taiwan conflict, only that it be resolved *peacefully*. This interest enables the United States to be content with a situation in which neither Taiwan nor China is fully satisfied with the status quo but both prefer peace to war.

What, then, should the United States do, and what should it avoid doing? First, the United States must continue its effort to maintain the capability and the credibility to deter Chinese use of force against Taiwan. In other words, the United States must hold up its end of the triangle of deterrence and dissuasion. Useful in this regard would be U.S. research and acquisitions strategies that maintain Chinese doubts that asymmetric strategies are enough to deter U.S. intervention. Such efforts should seek to protect the U.S. regional presence through the enhancement of C4I capabilities. U.S. defense planners should also consider how forward deployed arsenal ships can complement the role of aircraft carriers in deterrence, insofar as greater reliance on precision munitions and reduced exposure of U.S. soldiers to attack will enhance the credibility of the U.S. threat to intervene.

But the United States should not abandon its policy of ambiguity regarding intervention in a mainland-Taiwan conflict. Abandoning the present ambiguity would not enhance deterrence or stability, but it would impose a cost on the United States. President Bush got it right on April 25 when he said that Washington would do what it takes to help Taiwan defend itself, but also that the United States opposes a declaration of independence.

Ending ambiguity by clearly stating that the United States would not defend Taiwan in the event of a declaration of independence may clarify the U.S. posture, but it would not make deterrence of such a declaration any more effective. Taiwan is deterred by the credibility of PRC retaliatory threats, regardless of U.S. policy, because the United States cannot defend Taiwan against Chinese missiles or from the economic and political costs of even a limited war. Moreover, clear opposition to Taiwan's independence would be politically controversial in the United States, undermining the fragile domestic consensus on Taiwan policy and making it even more difficult for the White House to cooperate with China.

But neither should Washington abandon ambiguity by threatening intervention against the mainland's use of force under all circumstances. China cannot be deterred in the unlikely event of a Taiwan declaration of independence and it is already deterred from challenging the status quo by U.S. capabilities and commitments. Additional clarity would not enhance deterrence or cross-strait stability. But an unconditional U.S. commitment to defend Taiwan would undermine the U.S. ability to cooperate with China. It would affect mainland assessment of U.S. intentions, creating greater suspicion of the United States and reduced interest in cooperation.

Above all, the United States should

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not exaggerate the fragility of the cross-strait political or military balance. Stable deterrence across the Taiwan strait means that Washington can refrain from destabilizing initiatives intended to prepare for war and enhance Taiwan's security. The U.S.-mainland balance enables the United States to limit arms sales to Taiwan without undermining Taiwan's security. U.S. arms sales to Taiwan contribute only marginally to deterrence or to Taiwan's security. What really deters the mainland is not Taiwan's military but the U.S. military. Thus, with the important exception of ensuring Taiwan's air superiority, U.S. arms sales to Taiwan are not a major factor in the security equation. This is especially the case concerning the transfer of theater missile defense technologies to Taiwan. Rather than seek a panacea in an uncertain technology, the United States should have confidence in the strength of its overall deterrent capability and, thus, avoid unnecessary, provocative and destabilizing arms and technology transfers.

Similarly, enhanced U.S.-Taiwan defense planning and coordination will neither aid deterrence nor affect the outcome of a war. Overwhelming U.S. superiority deters unprovoked Chinese use of force. It also enables the United States to incur minimal casualties, so that the Pentagon would prefer to fight a war over Taiwan alone. Washington would demand that Taiwan's forces stand down, sparing the United States the need to manage the complexity of cooperating with Taiwan's relatively ineffective military and risking casualties from friendly fire in a very tight theater. On the other hand, determined U.S.-Taiwan military cooperation will eventually elicit costly mainland opposition. Despite recent U.S. efforts to alleviate the stress in U.S.-China relations and China's evident interest in minimizing U.S.-China tensions, Chinese civilian and military leaders appear to be increasingly concerned over the direction U.S.-Taiwan defense ties.

AS STURDY as the status quo in cross-strait relations is, it can be disrupted by unwise diplomacy that threatens the status of the 1979 U.S.-China strategic understanding. The policy changes emerging in the new administration have the potential to harm the interests of both the United States and Taiwan. Such policies will increase suspicion of the United States in Beijing and strengthen the hands of politicians who oppose Chinese cooperation with the United States.

That would be unfortunate. U.S. interest in cooperation with China is not limited to managing the Taiwan issue and avoiding war. U.S.-China cooperation contributes to stability on the Korean peninsula by enhancing Chinese incentives to constrain North Korean ballistic missile proliferation and nuclear weapons development, and by encouraging Pyongyang to pursue dialogue and peaceful unification with Seoul. It also contributes to stability in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf by encouraging China not to proliferate weapons and delivery systems to regional antagonists. It enables the United States to take advantage of China's market to enhance U.S. economic growth and the competitiveness of key U.S. industries. And it enables the United States to encourage political reform in China through economic, cultural and educational exchanges. Increased tension over Taiwan jeopardizes all of these interests without contributing to stability. Moreover, the greatest cost of conflict would be borne by Taiwan. Its security, prosperity and democracy would all be at risk should U.S.-China relations deteriorate seriously.

Rather than repeat the mistakes and subsequent retrenchments of past administrations, the Bush Administration should adopt the novel course of maintaining continuity with the China policy of its predecessors. It is still not too late. □

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Il Caso Silone

Michael P. McDonald

NEMO PROPHETA acceptus est in patria sua. The novels of Ignazio Silone are full of biblical symbols and citations, the latter often appearing in the lapidary cadences of the Vulgate. Reading through the Pléiade-like, two-volume set of Silone's *opera omnia*, which Mondadori released as the centenary of the writer's birth approached last year, one is struck by the extent to which Silone's creative vision sprang from and remained rooted in Scripture.

Of his near contemporaries, perhaps only André Gide matches Silone in the obsessive way he conscripts biblical sayings and stories to serve his fictional needs. But whereas the Bible was a psychological sounding board to Gide, a means to plumb the paradoxes and perversities of human nature, to Silone it was less a means to promote greater individual self-awareness than a hallowed reminder of the perennial want of human solidarity.

For most of his life, Gide was an apostle of aesthetic detachment and hedonistic self-absorption; Silone, in contrast, was one of the most *engagé* of 20th-century writers. And yet it is Gide whose recourse to the Bible sounds more ponderous and trite. That Silone avoids this fate is due, in no small part, to his abiding sense of irony. In his novels, Scripture is more likely to slither approvingly from the mouths of the Pharisees of his day—greedy landowners, spineless prelates, corrupt bureaucrats—than from heroes or truth-seekers. Silone is loath to preach. Curiously, of the many biblical sayings scattered throughout his work, one line—from Luke 24:4, quoted above: "No prophet is accepted in his own country"—is conspicuously missing. More than strange, the absence of this citation is fittingly ironic inasmuch as no other verse is more apposite in defining Silone's own reception as a writer in his native land.

If it were possible to poll Italian intellectuals of the last half century, the reactions one would most likely encounter at the sound of Silone's name are hatred, incomprehension and studied indifference. Silone's early involvement with and apostasy from various revolutionary movements forever branded him as much a political as a literary figure. Inevitably, this meant that anyone with the intellectual wherewithal to shape public opinion—journalists, academics, businessmen, party hacks and parish priests—held strong opinions about him. And excepting a cluster of liberals and democratic socialists—a discrete minority in Italy—it was not favorable. The question is why?

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The hatred Silone provokes in extremist political circles is easiest to explain. With the publication of his first novel, *Fontamara* (published first in German in 1933 and, later that same year, in a truncated Italian version), Silone did more to discredit fascism than any other Italian—and perhaps even European—writer of his day. The book, a searing denunciation of institutional injustice set in his native region of the Abruzzi during the early years of Mussolini's dictatorship, rapidly achieved international celebrity and ended up being translated into 27 languages. The same, *mutatis mutandis*, may be said of Silone's unmasking of communism after the publication of his 1949 essay, *Uscita di sicurezza* ("Emergency Exit"), later included as part of *The God that Failed*, Richard Crossman's famous postwar collection of confessional testimonies by disillusioned ex-communists.

Though they meet under different party labels these days, there remain significant numbers of unreconstructed fascists and communists in Italy whose graying ranks have been bolstered by the addition of younger Italians with no memory of the war and, as a twenty-something bartender made clear to me on my last visit to Rome, no great love of parliamentary democracy. This is particularly true of the neo-fascists who, having relegitimized their political presence under the polished leadership of Gianfranco Fini, gained even greater public acceptance this spring thanks to the impressive electoral success of Fini's free-market front-man and newly installed Italian president, media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi. Neither the fascists nor the communists have forgotten how Silone, an active voice in Italian politics until shortly before his death in 1978, discredited their respective causes. And the vendettas they bear keep the hatred alive.

The incomprehension that other, less ideologically inclined Italians feel toward Silone is also readily diagnosed. Silone himself provided the best explanation when, in a 1961 interview published in the Parisian magazine *L'Express*, he defined himself, memorably, as "a socialist without a party, a Christian without a church." Postwar Italian politics was (and remains) a *partitocrazia*—and a man without an identifiable political affiliation was a man destined to have his motives questioned.

Silone, in short, was a political loner, a trait which suited his dour temperament. Worse, he never wavered in reminding ordinary Italians of the heavy responsibility they themselves bore first, for having created fascism, and later, for having failed to construct an honest form of democratic socialism after the war. Hence the prevalent attitude of studied indifference to his writings and his life in Italian society at large. Silone could not help but be aware of and affected by the hostility and suspicion he provoked in his fellow countrymen. "When, as occasionally happened, I caught a glimpse of him on the streets of Rome", the novelist Antonio Debenedetti told me recently, "the sense of solitude that clung to him was overpowering." Given the events of his life, it could not have been otherwise.

SILONE WAS born in the town of Pescina dei Marsi, in the hardscrabble Marsica region of the Abruzzi, near Rome, on May 1, 1900. His father, who died when he was eight, owned a small farm in the region, and the boy's life, growing up poor in this provincial backwater, was simple and austere. When Silone was fifteen, a severe earthquake destroyed his native town and left over 30,000 people dead, including his mother. Homeless and virtually destitute, Silone and the sole remaining member of his immediate family, a younger brother named Romolo, were forced to rely upon private charities to survive. Moving about

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from one religious institution to another, Silone eventually made his way to Rome, where the political agitation that erupted in Italy near the conclusion of the First World War soon captured his imagination. In 1917 he dropped out of school and gravitated to the Socialist Youth Movement. Then, in 1921, having grown increasingly dissatisfied with the Socialist Party's reformist tendencies, the young revolutionary, together with leftist intellectuals Antonio Gramsci and Palmiro Togliatti, broke with it to found the Italian Communist Party. Silone's native intelligence and his talent with a pen quickly made him indispensible to the nascent party's organization, diffusion and propaganda. As a leading communist intellectual, Silone attended various international conferences on its behalf and often traveled abroad on clandestine missions. When the fascists, who had achieved power in 1922, succeeded in banning opposition parties in 1926, Silone risked imprisonment to stay in Italy to ensure that *l'Unità* and other communist papers continued to circulate clandestinely.

Corbis/Bettman

Silone in 1946

Beginning in 1927, however, Silone began to doubt the virtues and values embodied by the Communist Party. In May of that year, Silone and Togliatti had traveled to Moscow to attend a meeting of the International Communist Executive at the Kremlin, where Stalin sought to have Trotsky condemned on the basis of secret evidence. As recounted in *Uscita di sicurezza*, Silone refused to serve as an accomplice in Stalin's plan on the basis of blind faith in the higher historical purpose he purportedly served. In succeeding years, Silone's doubts about and refusal to embrace "Communist morality" persisted to the point where the party formally expelled him in 1931.

At that time he was living in Zurich, where he would remain until he returned to Rome in the fall of 1944. During these years of exile, Silone launched a new career as a writer and fastened on the pseudonym of Ignazio Silone to replace his baptismal name of Secondo Tranquilli. It was during this period of exile that he wrote the Abruzzi trilogy of novels *Fontamara*, *Bread and Wine* and *The Seed Beneath the Snow*; an important essay on the origins of fascism, *Der Faschismus*; and a political dialogue entitled *The School for Dictators*. The publication of these books catapulted Silone to the forefront of *engagé* political literature, alongside such prominent figures as George Orwell and Arthur Koestler, who were leading the fight against totalitarianism of both the Left and the Right. They brought Silone an international readership along with fame and admiration—except, that is, in Italy, where his life as an exile and an outlaw inescapably tainted his reception.

More than that, fascism had successfully interposed a barrier of censorship between the Italian reading public and the

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rest of the world's appreciation of Silone's originality as a writer. To earn a living, Silone had been forced to publish his first three novels in German. When an integral Italian version of the first of these, *Fontamara*, was finally released in Italy after the war in 1947, the book was nearly two decades old, literary neo-realism was in its heyday, and Silone's mannered use of realist techniques—quite avant-garde in 1930—by then seemed passé. Politically-motivated reviews from both the Right (including the Church) and the Left further ensured that the book would be ill-received. Silone was castigated particularly harshly by the clique of left-wing intellectuals led by men such as Elio Vittorini, whose influence after the Second World War became predominant in Italian culture. The noted critic Emilio Cecchi, commenting on "the disproportion between [Silone's] notoriety and success abroad and the coldness of [his] reception . . . in Italy", dubbed it, for lack of a better term, an odd situation, a true "*caso Silone*." Unfortunately for the Abruzzese writer, it was to be the first of many.

In addition to the impediments imposed by the political ramifications of his work, Silone's reception as a novelist in Italy was also hampered by his rough hewn, unadorned literary style. Silone's gifts as a writer were genuine, but he had grown up speaking an Abruzzi dialect. He wielded "proper" Italian well; and yet it would forever remain, as he himself pointed out in a celebrated preface he wrote to *Fontamara*, "a foreign language." "The Italian language cripples and deforms our thought", he wrote of both his Abruzzi characters and himself, "and cannot help giving them the flavor of a translation." It was an honest admission and yet one destined to place his work at odds with a generation of literary critics schooled to venerate the classic literary elegance of a Manzoni or a Leopardi. To them Silone's writing would always remain patently *infra dignitatem*.

It took Silone 16 years to write his first novel on Italian soil, *A Handful of Blackberries* (1960). In the meantime, he continued to bear witness to what he had experienced by writing countless political and social essays. In 1955, he started the anti-communist socialist magazine *Tempo presente* together with Nicola Chiaromonte, which antagonized potentates of all parties and beliefs in Silone's by-then well-known independent style. In 1965 Mondadori reissued *Fontamara*. That same year Silone came out with his autobiography, *Emergency Exit*, which took its title from the 1949 essay on his disillusionment with communism, which he included in it. Literary and political circles warmed to both books, and for a time it seemed as though Silone was winning over his domestic critics. Indeed, in a 1967 *Atlantic* article, Iris Origo asserted that he was finally receiving his due as a writer and a thinker as pre-war passions over fascism ebbed. For Italian critics "to admire Silone", she stated, "has now become not only the fashion, but almost a certificate of integrity."

But almost no sooner had these words been penned than a new *caso Silone* erupted as stories appeared in the press that same year asserting that the CIA had subsidized *Tempo presente* through Silone's connection with the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Silone's longstanding enemies on the Left had a field day with the revelation, vilifying him as a CIA spy. Silone claimed, plausibly enough to many, to have been unaware of the CIA's links to the Congress. But his reputation suffered another blow from which it had only partially recovered when Silone died in a clinic in Geneva on August 22, 1978.

In the two decades following Silone's death a confluence of factors slowly began to restore both his reputation and interest in his work. In part this was due to the

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efforts of the *Federazione Ignazio Silone* to promote his work in Italy and abroad. In part, it was also due to the influence of a number of celebrated literary critics—including Geno Pampaloni and Luce d'Eramo, both, sadly, deceased this year—who devoted themselves to advancing Silone's work. The collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989, too, softened intellectual resistance on the Left to Silone's implacable anti-communism. When both the center-left and the center-right of Italian politics imploded in the early 1990s in the wake of the *Mani pulite* scandals, Silone's lifelong appeal for the creation of a new brand of politics sustained by morality and integrity seemed more timely than ever. When in 1998 and 1999 the Mondadori publishing house decided to induct Silone's *oeuvre* into its canon of great Italian writers by publishing its deluxe, leather-bound, two-volume set of Silone's writing, one could have been forgiven for believing that his hour was at last at hand.

BUT WHAT should have been a final, if belated, recognition of Silone's seminal contributions to Italian literature and politics was not to be. Two somewhat obscure historians—Dario Biocca and Mauro Canali—came along to accomplish something the fascists and communists combined had been unable to achieve: level a near deathblow to Silone's reputation through the publication, in March 2000, of a slim volume prosaically entitled *L'informatore: Silone, i comunisti, e la polizia*.[1]

As an initial matter, it is worth noting that Biocca and Canali's book is less a coherent, unified work, than it is a clumsy stitching together of two essays on Silone that the authors had published separately a few years earlier in the revisionist historical journal of the Right, *Nuova storia contemporanea*. A revised version of Canali's 1999 essay appears first in the book and has as its purpose to prove that Silone spied for the fascists and, as a result, inflicted great damage on the Communist Party in the 1920s. In Part II of the book, Biocca takes over and similarly relies upon his previously published article to retrace in greater detail Silone's alleged movements and reports to the fascist police during this same decade. A new twelve-page introduction precedes these two sections in which the authors jointly state their conclusions in measured, scholarly tones. The "hard" evidence of Silone's collaboration is contained in two separate appendices at the back of the book: fifty pages or so of transcriptions of archival documents culled from the Central State Archive in Rome allegedly sent by Silone. In a brief preface to this entire mélange, Piero Melograni, one of the deans of Italian revisionist history, admiringly describes Biocca and Canali as "two daring companions" and praises them for their courage, first in accusing Silone of being a collaborator, and later in sticking to their guns when, as Melograni would have it (revising even the most recent history), "almost no one" in Italy believed them following the publication of their initial magazine revelations in 1998 and 1999.

The authors' indictment of Silone may be summarized as follows: Silone was "a high-profile informer" from the fall of 1919 to the start of 1930. Silone's "handler" was a Roman police inspector by the name of Guido Bellone. The cover name that Silone eventually used to pass information to Bellone was "Silvestri." Throughout this period, Silone belonged to a number of different organizations including, most importantly, the Italian Communist Party and the Comintern.

According to the authors, Silone was "singularly effective" in facilitating repressive measures against Communist

[1]Dario Biocca and Mauro Canali, *L'Informatore: Silone, i comunisti, e la polizia* (Milan: Luni Editrice, 2000).

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Party cadres operating clandestinely in Italy. The archival material proves, so they assert, that the contacts between Silone and Bellone were neither extemporaneous nor superficial. Rather, they maintain that there was an ongoing relationship lasting for well over a decade. Indeed, Biocca and Canali assert that Silone was the most intelligent informer that the fascists had at their disposal and that Silone's espionage reports assisted Mussolini's dictatorship immensely in its evisceration of the clandestine Communist movement.

Such, at any rate, are the accusations. Their indictment is serious and their motives notably subtle. At first blush, it may seem strange that right-wing revisionists would seemingly take Silone to task for helping the fascist police when one might think they would instead praise him for it. But this is to misunderstand the authors' method and objective. Biocca and Canali are careful never to express the slightest moral opprobrium at Silone's alleged betrayals. Rather, they strive to maintain a neutral tone of disinterested scholarship. Far from criticizing Silone for his asserted collaboration with the fascists, Biocca and Canali assert that their revelations are intended to cut through the fog of "hagiographical" research that has surrounded Silone and demonstrate how his collaboration was possible in the first place. The unspoken yet inescapable results of the authors' method of proceeding and their findings of "fact" are two: first, Silone is made out to be a badly compromised figure whose heretofore penetrating criticisms of fascism must inevitably be devalued; second, the moral stigma of fascist collaboration (either during the heyday of Mussolini or now) is diminished. After all, if someone of Silone's stature was drawn, for whatever reasons, to support it, who can possibly blame the average Italian citizen who did (or does) likewise?

Accusation is one thing, but substantiation is another matter altogether, and here it consists of a series of questionable suppositions precariously strung together by a morass of unreliable circumstantial evidence. Biocca and Canali assert that the espionage reports in the appendices to their book are the product of a single, highly placed informer inside the upper echelons of the Italian Communist Party who communicated with Mussolini's police throughout the 1920s. They further assert that there is an "absolute coincidence" between the date and the place of each one of these espionage reports and Silone's known whereabouts at the time. Finally, they assert that of all the informers in the pay of the fascist police only Silone had access to the detailed and important information revealed in these reports: *ergo*, Silone was the informer.

Significantly, at no point in their historical reconstruction do Biocca and Canali offer an explanation as to why Silone became an informer. He certainly was not motivated by political sympathy toward Mussolini's noxious regime. Nor do the reports they seek to attribute to Silone indicate that he ever received money in exchange for his services. Further, the authors can cite no eyewitness accounts that the accused ever engaged in espionage. To any reasonable observer, then, the case against Silone seems as thin as the FBI's botched case against Wen Ho Lee: mere circumstantial evidence in the form of access to important data that may have been compromised. But then there is Biocca and Canali's trump card: an extraordinary letter dated April 13, 1930, evidently in Silone's own hand, in which he writes to Bellone to say that he is abandoning militant politics and starting a new life to "repair the evil" he has caused.

The 1930 letter is a dramatic find, most scholars acknowledge its authority, and Biocca and Canali deserve credit for

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having located it. But more than a noteworthy discovery, it is the glitter that seemingly establishes the rest of the documentary nuggets assembled in *L'informatore* as unalloyed gold. It is the first letter allegedly from Silone that one reads in the authors' jointly-written introduction. It is the sole letter that the authors reproduce photographically rather than in transcription. Moreover, it is the one letter in the collection of spy reports assembled by Biocca and Canali in which the reader can actually hear something of Silone's mature voice—which perhaps explains why the authors quote it twice in its entirety. Why such lavish attention to establish the authenticity of this single letter? Simple: without it, Biocca and Canali surely realized how insubstantial the other documents they claim are from Silone would seem to a reasonable reader.

They need not have worried. In the scoop-driven age of journalism, the facts are never allowed to stand in the way of a good story. In olden days, as Oscar Wilde remarked, men had the rack; today we have the press. And the press, first in Italy, later in the United States, credulously retailed Biocca and Canali's story to the public as fact, doing its best to see to it that Silone's reputation as a man of uncommon integrity and moral courage would be broken once and for all.

When *L'informatore* first appeared in Italian bookstores last year, Biocca and Canali's allegations had been circulating in the Italian press for months due to the authors' earlier magazine articles and had, of course, been challenged by Silone's defenders. Nevertheless, Biocca and Canali's clever decision to reproduce transcriptions of their archival discoveries in the appendices to their book provided the Italian press with the opportunity to pronounce a "final" verdict on this latest and most disturbing *caso Silone*. A sampling of headlines says it all: from *La Repubblica* (March 23, 2000), "Silone the spy, crushed by the proof"; from the *Corriere della sera* (March 25, 2000), "Silone: the espionage reports of a 'humble Christian'"; from *Il Manifesto* (May 12, 2000), "Bitter reports" ("*Fonti amare*", a derisive pun on the title of Silone's first novel). In the best tradition of tabloid journalism, most of the Italian press accepted at face value the attribution of these espionage reports to Silone, never thinking to question the authenticity of the documents in the appendices. The guiding assumption appeared to be that if the 1930 letter in Silone's hand was genuine, as seemed to be the case, then the other documents released by Biocca and Canali had to be as well—which meant that Silone had been a long-term informer. Such debate as the Italian press allowed grew out of establishing a motive that would explain Silone's decade-long paper trail of betrayal.

One theory held that Bellone had something to do with the earthquake relief to the Abruzzi in 1915 and, having befriended Silone at that time, was later able to exact repayment in the form of espionage reports. Another was that the first meeting between the two took place in Rome during the militant phase of Silone's adolescence in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. According to this theory, Bellone had probably been in charge of interrogating Silone after one or another of his arrests for political protesting and, in the course of playing the "good cop", had, over time, induced him to collaborate. Still another hypothesis was that Silone wrote to Bellone throughout the 1920s with the knowledge and approval of Togliatti and other high-ranking Communist officials—in other words, had been allowed to maintain these contacts with the fascist police and to provide them with harmless information to see if he could learn what *they* knew about Communist Party activities.

To be sure, there were those who

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adamantly rejected the claim that Silone had anything to do with the fascists. The late Indro Montanelli, a highly respected editorial writer for the *Corriere della sera*, said that he "wouldn't believe the truth of these documents if Silone rose from the tomb and confirmed them." But hyperbolic statements such as these tended to make Silone's defenders look too much like true believers in the face of overwhelming documentary proof and, in the end, may have solidified the media-generated impression that Biocca and Canali had the goods on Silone.

The only immediate negative reaction to Biocca and Canali's book came from the historian Mimmo Franzinelli in the June 2000 issue of the literary periodical *L'Indice*.[2] Franzinelli is the author of a book on Mussolini's police entitled *I tentacoli dell'Ovra* ("The OVRA's Tentacles") which is, by all accounts, the most exhaustive historical examination of who spied for the fascists in the 1920s and 1930s.[3]

In his review, Franzinelli criticized Biocca and Canali for failing to define what they mean by "collaboration." He noted that there is no evidence that Silone reported to the OVRA, as a highly placed, long-term political collaborator would inevitably have done. Thus Biocca and Canali's claim of "collaboration" rests on the fact that Silone wrote one or perhaps more letters to a specific person, Guido Bellone, a relatively low-level police functionary. Franzinelli further observed how the authors cleverly isolated and decontextualized the full extent of the information that Silone allegedly provided, with the inevitable result that "Silvestri", as the informer would later identify himself, is made to stand out in sinister solitude in the guise of the most formidable spy hidden in the Italian Communist Party. In fact, however, the police had access to much the same information as Biocca and Canali unearthed from any number of other sources. Franzinelli also faulted the authors for lack of philological rigor. He noted how their transcriptions of the police reports are full of inexplicable gaps, seem to have been hastily made, and are in some instances simply erroneous. Most important, Franzinelli noted how Biocca's contribution to the book, which touches upon aspects of Silone's life in the 1920s, undervalues the repercussions on Silone of the arrest of his younger brother, Romolo, on April 13, 1928. And yet, these reservations notwithstanding, Franzinelli accepted the assertion that all of the material adduced by Biocca and Canali was ultimately traceable to Silone.

Yet nagging questions remained. If Silone had been, as Biocca and Canali assert, an important spy, then why did he report to an ordinary police official? Why couldn't Silone have used his influence as an important collaborator to save the life of his brother, who died in prison in 1932? Conversely, why didn't the OVRA ever seek to blackmail Silone to force him to reveal much more about the Communist Party's illegal activities? And, after Silone had stopped informing, why didn't the OVRA later react to novels such as *Fontamara*, which utterly discredited Mussolini and fascism, by revealing Silone as a spy and enabling the Italian Communist Party to do the dirty work of liquidating him for them?

Franzinelli raised, but had no answers, to these questions. But at least he asked them. When news of Biocca and Canali's book reached the United States and England, the press hardly bothered to raise a skeptical eyebrow. For example, on May 15, 2000, *The New Yorker* published an article by Alexander Stille, entitled "The Spy Who Failed", that, with minor qualifications, accepted the allegations

[2]Franzinelli, "Silvestri, l'infame", *L'Indice* (June 2000), pp. 10–1.

[3]OVRA stands for *Opera di vigilanza e repressione dell'antifacismo*.

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that Silone had spied as true. Similar stories reaching similar conclusions later appeared in *The Nation* and the *Times Literary Supplement.*

Given the dismal state of literary criticism, perhaps it was inevitable that the allegations of fascist collaboration would awaken interest in Silone as a "transgressive" writer, which in fact occurred. A case in point was an article in the February 2001 issue of *La Rivista dei Libri* (the Italian version of the *New York Review of Books)* by Giulio Ferroni. Ferroni reread Silone's novels looking for proof in them of his collaboration and, as other critics would do, fastened on an episode in *Bread and Wine* in which a character by the name of Luigi Murica confessed to having been an informer.

Silone surely knew about ex-comrades who provided information to the fascists. His experience was not so limited that he could only write about what he himself knew or did. Silone's novels were not works of thinly-veiled autobiography but rather imaginative transformations of his experiences. But for critics such as Ferroni, Silone suddenly seemed much more interesting now that the heretofore bright boundaries between the "good" and "evil" in his books had been rendered clouded and equivocal by the "proof" of his own collaboration. As Stille counterintuitively noted in his *New Yorker* piece, the allegations of double-dealing added a new dimension to Silone's work. "The recent revelations don't diminish the power of Silone's writing", Stille wrote. "If anything, his heroic image may have obscured the darkness and complexity of his books." In other words, now that Silone had been exposed as a moral *poseur* (think of Gide) and could no longer be considered a "simplistic" political icon, he had suddenly become "sexy" to literary critics, who quickly turned him into a kind of thumbnail cliché of equivocalness. And, as Brian Hall has observed, "literary clichés do not die easily, especially when informed by superficialities."[4]

FROM THE moment in the late 1990s when they first charged Silone with informing, Biocca and Canali received an enormous amount of favorable press coverage. Far from being adventurous souls who, as Melagrano would have it, courageously took on the Establishment, the Italian media has embraced their accusations with open arms, while the Anglo-American press has made slight pretense of reporting questions as to the accuracy of the story. To those few voices raised in opposition, Biocca and Canali have pointed to the morass of documents appended to their book and dared them to refute what they claim is irrefutable.

Fortunately, for the sake of historical truth, a socialist historian named Giuseppe Tamburrano accepted the challenge. Together with two other researchers, Gionna Granati and Alfonso Isinelli, he set out in the fall of 2000 to put Biocca and Canali's book under a microscope. He published his conclusions in Italy on April 20 in the form of a 161-page work entitled *Processo a Silone: la disavventura di un povero cristiano* ("Silone on Trial: The Misadventure of a Humble Christian").[5] Thanks to Tamburrano and his colleagues we are able to see that *L'informatore* is a travesty of scholarship.

Tamburrano's pugnacious, lawyer-like defense of Silone is based almost exclusively on the police records themselves. As an initial matter he notes that the fascists used every means at their disposal to dig up dirt on their adversaries and were

[4]Hall, *The Impossible Country: A Journey Through the Last Days of Yugoslavia* (New York: Penguin, 1994), p. 68.

[5]Tamburrano, Granati and Isinelli, *Processo a Silone: la disavventura di un povero cristiano* (Taranto: Piero Lacaita Editore, 2001).

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only too willing to accept as true whatever malicious slander was spread around against an enemy of the State. Accordingly, the material stored in the Central State Archive is full of unreliable, incomplete and inconsistent material. In the case of police reports on Silone himself, Tamburrano found enormous errors. For example, Silone is identified as a "card-carrying communist" throughout 1935–39 even though the party expelled him in 1931. Some documents in Silone's file say there was no available photograph or handwriting for him; others note the existence of both: the former invaluable for apprehending Silone, who was perpetually on the run from the police; the latter material being quite useful for forging incriminating documents in Silone's "own" hand. This points up the fact that the information contained in the police files has been edited by an endless number of nameless people, and that multiple errors have crept into the record without being the least bit traceable.

With that in mind, Tamburrano and his staff sought to ascertain whether there were espionage reports that could objectively be attributed to Silone; if so, how many; and whether those that could fairly be attributed to him contained any harmful information. Biocca and Canali assert that Silone collaborated with the police as early as 1919 and definitely from 1923 to 1930. For the period between January 1923 and April 1928, they produce about fifty documents that they say demonstrate the existence of a spy relationship between Silone and the political police. But in addition to examining the documents unearthed by Biocca and Canali, Tamburrano and his colleagues also looked through the archives held by the Minister of the Interior and the Central State Archive. They then examined contemporary press reports and memoirs to determine the true importance, if any, of the information in the reports allegedly attributable to Silone.

As an initial matter, Tamburrano demonstrates that the documents Biocca and Canali attribute to Silone invariably refer only to information that the police received from a "source." The name, pseudonym and code number of the "source" are never revealed. In other words, there is no way to identify who provided the documents to the police. More precisely, the sequence of documents presented by Biocca and Canali runs from January 12, 1923 to March 3, 1930. The name of "Silvestri", as the informer, appears only beginning in April 30, 1928 (and as "Silvestro", not "Silvestri"). In short, the pseudonym "Silvestri" is only attributable to Silone after the arrest of his brother. *None* of the informational reports attributed by Biocca and Canali to Silone from January 12, 1923 to April 1928 contain any reference to "Silvestri" as their author. Biocca and Canali provide no explanation for this. They do not even pose the question. And because we are dealing with anonymous reports, written by different people, which contain, Tamburrano shows, only the most generic and innocuous information, there is no reason, scholarly or otherwise, to attribute them to Silone.

Second, Tamburrano retained a handwriting expert who routinely provides expert testimony in civil and criminal proceedings in Italy to express an opinion as to whether the one other handwritten document unearthed by the authors, in addition to the April 13, 1930 letter, was indeed penned by Silone. Her conclusion? Absolutely not. At this point, one is left with one most likely genuine letter from Silone (that of April 13, 1930), one false attribution, and a mass of redacted, anonymously re-written reports.

To be sure, with respect to the anonymous, re-written reports, Biocca and Canali say they can prove an absolute

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coincidence in terms of the information provided to the police and what Silone would have known at the time, as well as an absolute coincidence between where the espionage reports came from and Silone's whereabouts. Tamburrano examines each of these contentions and dismantles them one by one.

For example, during the period from January 12, 1923 to February 22, 1930, a period of six years and three months, the reports Biocca and Canali attribute to Silone establish that the informer in question attended a mere six meetings. But Silone was an active Communist leader during this period and would have participated in dozens, perhaps hundreds, of meetings. These years were full of epochal events for the Italian Communist Party in which Silone directly participated. Yet there is no trace of these events in the police files. Are we to conclude, Tamburrano rightly asks, that Silone was so inept as an informer that he only sent six reports? It doesn't make sense.

As for Biocca and Canali's assertions that the police received reports from wherever Silone happened to be and that when he departed, the reports from that place ceased, this too, according to Tamburrano, is pure invention.

Consider that, in order to know for certain whether such a coincidence of place held true one would need to know exactly in each instance when Silone arrived and left a country and how long it took a letter to arrive in Rome from Silone's location. But no one knows for sure—certainly not Biocca and Canali—the strict answer to either question. There is not always hard evidence as to where Silone was at any given time, and the places from which the police received reports (e.g., Berlin) were full of hundreds of other spies from whom the police could have received these reports.

Biocca and Canali claim that it took anywhere from three to five days for a letter sent by Silone when he was abroad to arrive in Rome and to be dated and transmitted to the Minister of Public Safety. But their own documents belie the assertion. For example, one document is transmittal-dated October 7, but refers to demonstrations that were about to be held in France on September 28.

Moreover, it is impossible to tell where many of the police reports relied upon by Biocca and Canali originated. The archival reports may indicate that a report had been sent from France, and Silone may indeed have been in Marseilles at the time. But the report in question may have come from Paris or Lyon. One need bear in mind that the documents do not always contain what the source sent to the Roman police headquarters. Quite often they are composites from different places and sources that have been assembled in a subsequent report. In addition, Tamburrano establishes that these reports were written by different people, as the different forms of address to the recipients (at times the informal *tu*, at times the formal *lei*) suggest. In some instances, the informant writes about Tranquilli—that is, Silone—as a participant in the very events he describes. These reports make little sense if "translated" into the first person and attributed to Silone. Further, they often misidentify Communist leaders whose identities Silone could not possibly have mistaken.

As for Biocca and Canali's claim that the reports they attribute to Silone contained damaging information, this too is false. Tamburrano demonstrates how some of the information in the reports was already available in the press. Other information reported to the police in these documents is simply wrong. The remainder contains generic information about Communist activities of little value to the police.

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WHAT IS THE truth? But for the thick clouds of dust kicked up by Biocca and Canali and their doting press allies there would hardly be a need to strap Occam's razor to see more clearly. On the one hand, we have Biocca and Canali's complicated, motiveless theory that a committed anti-fascist spied for the fascists, with all of the logical loose-ends mentioned above. Seemingly oblivious to this manifest absurdity, Biocca went so far as to refer to Silone in a press interview as "an authentic communist and a convinced [fascist] informer." Yet it is simply passing belief to argue that a communist leader, and an implacable enemy of the fascists, would collaborate with Mussolini's regime freely. Moreover, if Silone had been a "convinced informer", his role was to provide whatever valuable information he had at his disposal. In the decade Silone was supposed to have collaborated, his role in the Italian Communist Party grew ever more important. By the end of the decade he had the means, had he so chosen, to destroy the Communist net of clandestine operatives once and for all. But he did nothing of the kind, this despite the fact that, had he been an informer, the OVRA could have threatened to reveal his collaboration with the regime—a threat that would have destroyed his career and endangered his life. In short, the "narrative" Biocca and Canali provide, so avidly reported in the press, does not hold water.

There is a much simpler competing explanation. We know from the April 13, 1930 letter that Silone clearly knew Bellone and had some relationship with him before the arrest of his brother in 1928, but it is impossible to say what type of relationship existed or for how long. Then, sometime around 1928, Silone renewed contact with Bellone. Why? To help his brother. Silone was very attached to Romolo. Indeed, he told his brother's wife, shortly before Romolo died in prison, that, as the only other surviving member of the family, he felt it his duty to help and protect him. Moreover, at the time he was arrested, Romolo was traveling to meet Silone. Silone had arranged to get him across the border into Switzerland, but Romolo was caught carrying false documents Silone had enabled him to obtain. When the police discovered that Romolo was Silone's brother, his situation worsened. It is easy to understand why Silone felt responsible for his brother's arrest, and it is more than reasonable to suppose that Silone's sense of guilt led him to do what he could to save his brother from torture and death. But notwithstanding his efforts, including the mobilization of an international aid campaign (which included help from Nobel Prize-winner Romain Rolland), his brother died at the age of 28, on October 28, 1932. Silone's guilt complex may well have included the fact that he had supplied information on the Communist Party—no matter how useless—to a "friend" with the police in Rome: Bellone.

Tamburrano adduced four other facts to prove conclusively that Silone was never a long-term informant. In a 1937 report made by the head of the political police to Mussolini, the report noted that Silone had sent in "generic information . . . in order that it might help his brother", but that otherwise no compromising information on Silone existed. Two years later in 1939, the fascist Minister of the Interior, alarmed at Silone's work from his Swiss exile to discredit fascism, requested from police headquarters in the Abruzzi "any possible episode from [Silone's] private life that could be used to discredit him abroad." The request similarly found nothing. By 1957 the fascists were no longer in power, but Silone still had enemies. Tamburrano repeats how that year the then-Minister for Internal Affairs also ordered an investigation into Silone's

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background in order to gather compromising information on him, with nothing to show for it. And, most recently, Tamburrano queried the head of the Central State Archive to learn whether Silone's name, pseudonym or file code number appeared on any government lists of individuals who had collaborated with the OVRA. The response he received was negative. In short, there is no reliable evidence—none—that Silone ever informed, other than whatever minimal contact he may have had with Bellone while attempting to save his brother's life.

IN A REVIEW of Silone's political dialogue, *The School of Dictators*, dated June 8, 1939 and published in the *New English Weekly*, George Orwell described Silone as a "revolutionary and an honest man" and hence "one of those men who are denounced as Communists by Fascists and as Fascists by Communists." It was Orwell's implicit hope that such denunciations would not discourage men and women from reading Silone and discovering the valuable truths he had to tell about justice and politics. The latest *caso Silone* is a further distraction from that goal. But perhaps soon the denunciations of Silone in Italy will cease, and the prophet will be welcome at last in his own land, even in Rome. If Silone could only see it come to pass, no doubt he would again quote Scripture: "Blessed be the Lord; For He hath shown me His wondrous lovingkindness in an entrenched city."[6] □

[6]Psalms, 31:22.

Telling Left From Wrong

I can sum up much of what has been said by Italy's formerly Communist Left in the post-Communist era as follows: "It is true, we were wrong, but we were right to be wrong: the other left was right, but it was wrong to be right." It has never been easy to explain Italian political events to foreign observers.

—Renato Brunetta, *Daedalus*, Summer 2001

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Altitude Sickness

Poverty and Violence in the Mountains

S. Frederick Starr

AT THE checkout counter of my grocer is an attractive magazine for New Age shoppers entitled *Shambhala Sun*. This evocative name refers to the mythical mountain realm of the Tibetan Buddhists, a hidden place symbolizing purity, truth and wisdom. It is also what James Hilton had in mind when he created the land of Shangri-La in his 1933 novel, *Lost Horizons*. As it happens, just last summer I was camping on the Kazakstan-Russian border in the shadow of Beluka, a 16,600-foot peak that local people have long associated with Shambhala. It is indeed an awesome sight, altogether worthy of the symbolic role assigned to it by Buddhists and assorted mystics such as Henry Wallace's friend, the Russian visionary painter Nikolai Roerich. But the deep valleys of the Altai Mountain range that surround Beluka are more notable for another characteristic: the peoples who inhabit them are desperately poor and increasingly frustrated over their circumstances.

For modern urbanites, the world's high mountain zones are symbols of unspoiled nature and timeless truths that, we often presume, somehow escape the lowland denizens of the global marketplace. They are places depicted on gorgeous calendars, locales for "trekking" (formerly known as hiking) and other forms of eco-tourism. But for the people who actually live in them they are all too often places of neglect or persecution, economic and cultural breakdown, and spiraling violence. Indeed, a disproportionate number of the world's bloodiest zones of conflict today are in mountain regions.

The majestic Andes highlands of Peru, for example, were for years the scene of a relentless battle between local *campesinos* and the intellectuals who led them, on the one hand, and the Peruvian army and security forces on the other. The fighting pitted ethnic Indians against the Spanish culture of Lima, and coca planting against the economic uncertainties of legal market crops. It turned entire areas of the Incas' enchanting mountain home into a killing zone. The Sendero Luminoso and Tupac Amaru are less in evidence today, but few if any of the problems that gave rise to them have been solved.

A world away, the Caucasus region presents an equally romantic picture of towering peaks and brooding ruins, a region celebrated by Russian poets, Lermontov and Pushkin among them, and by the young novelist Tolstoy. But beginning in 1989, fighting in the small territory of Karabakh ("The Black

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Garden") cost thousands of Muslim Azeris and Christian Armenians their lives and led eventually to a million displaced Azeris, one of the largest groups of refugees anywhere in the world today.

Chechnya, one of several Muslim provinces in Russia's North Caucasus range, presents another struggle in the mountains, but this time between central and local rule. Several hundred thousand Russian troops, tribal guerrilla fighters and civilians have perished there in two vicious phases of warfare, with no end to the fighting in sight. The Russians' best hope is that the violence can be kept from spilling over into the neighboring mountains of Dagestan and Ingushetia. Meanwhile, in the South Caucasus, independent Georgia faces armed independence movements in Ossetia and Abkhazia.

In Mexico's inaccessible and mountainous Chiapas state yet another struggle against central rule proceeds. The fact that no religious differences divide the parties, and that the Indian-Spanish ethnic split is only partial, may make this conflict less bloody. But it poses as serious a challenge to Mexico as any that country has seen in decades. The struggles in Chechnya and Chiapas are in some respects similar to the generation-long conflict over Turkey's remote and still undeveloped southeastern provinces, where ethnic Kurds, peripheral to Turkish culture and political geography, have waged armed struggle for greater control over their own affairs. Episodic Kurdish struggles against Iran, Iraq and Syria fit a roughly similar pattern.

An undeclared civil war in Nepal pits Maoist insurgents against an ineffective and discredited central authority in half of the country's 75 districts, with the rebels now in full control of five districts. Like Afghanistan's Taliban, the rebels forcefully impose a puritanical order wherever they go, and are often welcomed in mountain huts for doing so. For the insurgents promise stability and a government attuned to the needs of impoverished mountain peoples, rather than to the urban middle class of Kathmandu.

Not all mountain conflicts pit indigenous locals against the armies of remote central governments. For four years in the early 1990s a civil war raged across the newly independent Central Asian state of Tajikistan. Ninety-five percent covered with mountains, Tajikistan produced a many-sided conflict in which regional interests, rival Muslim religious factions, clan and ethnic groupings, and a weak central government all played a part.

Other mountain-based conflicts combine ethnic, religious, central-local and cultural issues in ways so complex as to make the factors inextricable from one another. The Balkans (Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia) are prime examples of how such diverse threads can be woven into a web of strife, and are the more notable because during the previous two generations the peoples involved had lived together quite amicably.

No mountain zone has witnessed more bloodshed over the past two decades than the Hindu Kush, Pamir and Kohi-Baba ranges that make up Afghanistan. This crisis, like the struggle in Karabakh, began when one state invaded another, in this case the Soviet Union's 1979 assault on Kabul. As in Communist Yugoslavia and Tajikistan, the old state collapsed, leaving the field open to a range of local warlords and their competing foreign supporters.

The one respect in which the struggle in Afghanistan surpasses all other mountain conflicts is the impact of locally grown drugs on the country and on its neighbors. Yet even though Afghanistan has been producing 85 percent of the world's heroin—until this year—the combination of drugs and mountain-based conflicts is not unique to that country. It is a root cause of the ongoing fighting in

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the mountains of Colombia's interior, and the reason President Clinton committed $1.2 billion to stop it. The Balkans, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Chiapas and Kurdistan are all important transit points for drugs, as are Kashmir and the north of Myanmar, two more mountain regions where strife prevails.

THIS CURSORY survey of three continents suggests an intriguing correlation: While only about one-sixth of the world's population lives in mountainous zones or areas immediately adjacent to them, such regions account for a solid majority of the bloodiest and most intractable contemporary conflicts. To be sure, other geographical zones claim their share of strife, whether the arid lands of the Levant and Arabia, the islands of Indonesia, or the coastal plains of West Africa. Further, there is always the possibility that the "mountain-ness" of Chechnya, Colombia, Afghanistan, Chiapas, Karabakh, Kashmir, Peru and the Balkans is just a coincidence, or that it is less important than any of a number of other factors, whether ethnic or religious differences, demands for autonomy or independence, or the putative "clash of civilizations."

The world press has been quick to ascribe virtually every instance of bloodshed in mountain regions to "ethnic tension", "age-old religious differences" or some other potted phrase acting as a substitute for thought. Governments, including that of the United States, have tended to shy away from direct, hands-on involvement in most such conflicts because they are deemed to be *ipso facto* irreconcilable, like a Rubik's cube with no solution. Yet not one of these standard factors is present in all the conflicts enumerated above, let alone in others not mentioned. The fact that serious conflicts occur in mountain regions where one or several of these factors are absent should counsel us to search more deeply for their true causes. So if something negative is happening in the world's mountain regions that goes beyond "ethnic and religious strife", what might this something be?

The simplest explanation for all this conflict in mountainous territories draws from an old folklore-embellished argument well known to every American: mountain people are naturally scrappy. North Carolina's feisty mountaineers managed to strike adversarial poses in nearly every conflict facing their state from the Revolution onward. The Hatfield and McCoy families may have confined their multi-generational grudge match to the area of Tug Fork in the Appalachians, but they are enduring symbols of mountain folks' tendency everywhere neither to forgive nor forget. Nor should we neglect to mention the old-country home of many American mountaineers—the Scottish Highlands, whose clans have fought and feuded their way into indelible legend.

It cannot be denied that once aroused to battle, mountain people are loath to give up. The sense of territoriality, independence and cohesive social relations formed in isolated upland valleys are perfectly suited to sustain conflicts over the long haul. One could argue that relative isolation from the cosmopolitanism and culture sharing of other regions has led to a general sort of illiberalism of attitudes, as well as to an accentuation of the "mine versus thine" mentality. In several cases, too, the relative isolation and insularity of mountainous regimes has either contributed to religious heterodoxy or provided a literal stronghold for it—Lebanon being perhaps the most vivid example. And no one can deny that the martial reputation of many mountain dwellers—Gurkhas, Druze, Hokka and Pashtuns, for example—is well deserved.

The problem with this general line of argument, however, is that it fails to

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account for the long periods of peace that have prevailed in practically every one of the mountain regions now riddled by strife. It is convenient to point in each case to some ineluctable point of conflict that triggered the combative mountain psyche, but then one must explain why for generations the same people managed to coexist in peace.

Besides that, there is an even more compelling reason to discount what we might call topographical-cultural arguments, and that is the presence of a more pervasive explanatory factor. If one were actually to visit all the various mountain territories where conflicts have raged over the last generation, the one overwhelming impression they would leave is not that of human belligerence but of human poverty. With few exceptions, such as Taiwan, mountain people are on the wrong side of the growing gulf between the world's haves and have-nots. Of the billion people earning less than a dollar a day, three quarters are rural, with mountain people forming a solid core of that population. The UN's Millennium Summit may have vowed to halve poverty by 2015 but the major international lending institutions' and donor agencies' support for the entire rural sector, of which mountain areas are an important part, plummeted by two-thirds between 1987 and 1998.

The exceptional poverty of most of the world's mountain peoples is manifest by practically any measure. Their *per capita* income is miserably low: from 60 to 80 percent of mountain peoples in developing countries live below poverty levels established by their own national governments. Abysmally poor roads, undeveloped or nonexistent rail systems, and lack of air service deepen their natural isolation. Electricity is often absent, as are basic sanitation, public health and education. Telephones are few and unreliable, even in district centers, and postal service is slow. Despite their isolation, or perhaps because of it, mountain peoples have been shortchanged in all the infrastructures needed to participate in the modern world.

Not all mountain people live in misery, of course, and by no means all the world's poor are mountaineers. But whereas many cultures in the tropical jungles collapse suddenly with the destruction of forest habitats, mountain peoples tend to endure, clinging to what remains of their traditional lives in the face of intrusions from the lowlands, even as they curse the lowland politicians who withhold from them the benefits of modernity. The fact that many mountain zones are on remote national borders and nearly inaccessible from their capitals helps assure that their relative backwardness will deepen over time. Worse, in many cases they are defined as security zones, assuring that investments there are dominated by military concerns rather than the needs of economic and social development.

At the same time, mountain regions are sufficiently linked with lowland population hubs to feel what Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal termed the "backwash effect."[1] Cheap and poorly made products reach them by truck, cart or in bundles carried on the heads of mountaineer tradesmen. The effect of this rudimentary commerce is to gradually undermine traditional skills and to draw upland villagers into the low end of the money economy. The need to spend on simple items like cooking pots and kerosene diverts resources from agriculture and animal husbandry. The quality of seed corn, barley and livestock gradually erodes, which undermines local production of foodstuffs. Little by little moun-

[1]Myrdal, *The Challenge of World Poverty* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970); and *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968).

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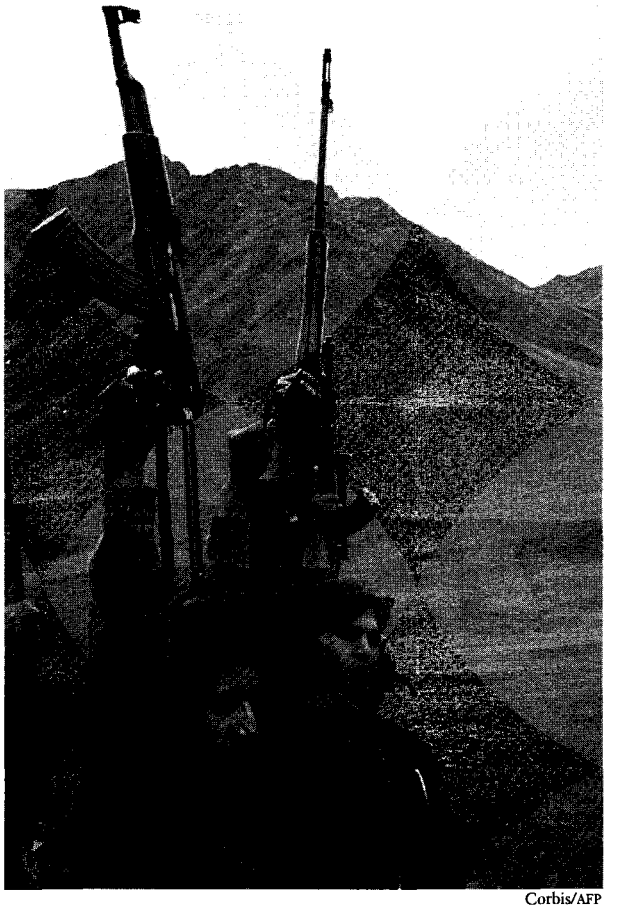

Corbis/AFP

Islamic guerrillas of the Kashmiri militant group Al-Badar.

tain settlements and other marginal communities that were formerly self-sustaining are forced to turn to the urban centers for basic provisions, beginning with kerosene and cooking oil and extending finally to flour. Soon they begin sending their young men to the cities in hopes that they will remit some of their meager earnings to their families back in the mountains.

This process, common to all marginal communities, presents particular challenges to mountain peoples. Their very distance and inaccessibility from lowland centers means that they often hold out longer before beginning the process of interaction with burgeoning urban centers, dropping further and further behind all the while. Once begun, however, the process often takes on a desperate character, proceeding with a cataclysmic intensity that ends with large-scale out-migration and the collapse of the community.

The downward spiral of dependence brings few, if any, positive compensations. The growing impoverishment of mountain peoples is clearly registered in declining indicators of human development. Across the western Himalayan chain barely a third of adults are literate and the percentage is falling, as it is also in the Balkans and the Caucasus. In the Atlas Mountains of Algeria illiteracy is near universal. Tuberculosis, hepatitis and drug addiction spread unchecked in many upland populations. Mountain peoples' contact with commercial centers in the lowlands is great enough to bring HIV into their world, but not great enough to bring any treatment for it.

Looming over all these problems is the spread of malnutrition. In parts of Nepal, Peru and Tibet inhabitants of formerly thriving mountain areas now experience basic food deficits for up to 40 percent of the year. Many have no choice but to flee to cities in order to beg. Malnutrition in turn brings high levels of infant mortality and shortened life expectancy.

Many of these conditions have been created and sustained even under capitalism. Switzerland, a few other west European regions, and resort centers like those in Colorado, Canada's Banff or Japan's Nagano prefecture are the rare exceptions. Large impoverished swaths of the Appalachians from Maine to Georgia are more typical of the situation even in the world's richest economy. Until recent times, mountainous areas of Japan were analogously depressed. In each one of these cases, national politicians concluded that mountain populations were suffi-

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ciently remote and politically passive to be ignored.

If the capitalist world's record regarding mountain peoples is less than perfect, that of socialism and communism is appalling, and for a simple reason: Marxism's "labor theory of value" placed no value on natural resources, including water, which are among a mountain region's chief assets. The Soviet system viewed mountain communities mainly as a source of cheap labor, and thought nothing of forcefully resettling entire upland populations in lowlands as cotton farmers or factory laborers. Since the fall of the USSR such populations have often sought to return to their former mountain homes, only to find them in ruins. Embittered, these mountaineers returning from forced exile have generated many of the conflicts in Tajikistan and the North Caucasus that the Western press prefers to blame on religious and ethnic animosities.

Everywhere the message is the same: If you want to earn a decent living and reap even the meanest benefits of globalization, you must leave your age-old communities and your traditional cultures, with all they represent, and move to the mushrooming squalor of lowland urban centers. This is what once drove thousands of families from Menifee County, Kentucky to the steel works of Pittsburgh and Lorain, Ohio, and it is what today is driving mountain people to cities like Lima, Islamabad, Bishkek, Srinagar, Novorossiisk, Istanbul and Baku. Left unchecked, the worldwide failure to address the issue of mountain poverty will simply transfer the entire problem to ungovernable and volatile mega-cities.

Nor do those left behind in the mountains simply sink into passivity. It is worth noting that the armed Kurdish rebellion broke out and flourished in the mountains of eastern Anatolia precisely when many hundreds of thousands of other Kurds were heading for new lives in Istanbul or Ankara. Similarly, West Virginia's miners were at their most militant at the very time that many of their neighbors were heading to work in the mills of the Cuyahoga and Monongahela valleys.

ACKNOWLEDGING the many forces that are gradually undermining mountain communities and the economies that sustain them, the question remains as to why these problems have reached the breaking point during the past twenty years. The blame lies squarely with the ever-increasing tempo of modernization and globalization. Even weak national economies are strong enough to draw mountain people into their lowest ranks. Communications are poor, but they are good enough to enable millions of mountaineers to understand for the first time just what they are missing. The rapid decline of many large and ecologically primitive extractive industries, like the phosphate mines in Kazakstan's Jungaria-Allatau range and the antimony mines in the Kyrgyz Pamirs, have left millions of mountain people out of work, but with no sustainable traditional life to serve as a refuge.

The collapse of totalitarian systems, too, and the weakening of central control from Peru to Nepal, Pakistan, Iran and India, have emboldened frustrated mountaineers to lash out against their fate, even to take up arms when all else fails. Paramilitary groups and warlords quickly emerge to fill the gap left by absent or ineffective central governments. Inevitably, this leads to conflicts with rival warlords, central armies or both.

These developments set the context for the extraordinary growth of narcotics production and the narco-trade worldwide over the past twenty years.

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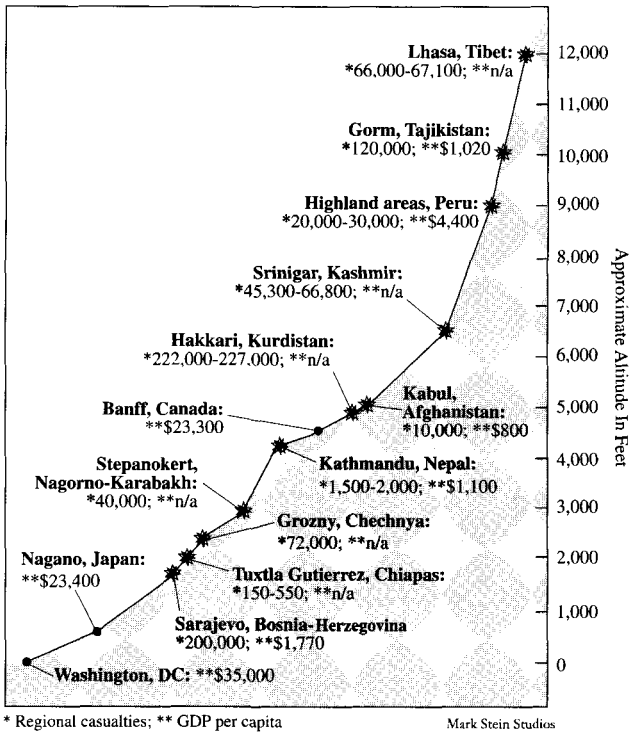

* Regional casualties; ** GDP per capita

Mark Stein Studios

Trafficking in narcotics is often the mountaineer's preferred method for participating in globalization. Both coca and poppies are perfectly suited to the climate and isolation of many mountain zones. Americans may regret the eagerness with which Colombians, Pashtuns, Peruvians or Tajiks plunge into this burgeoning industry, but are these people not making the same rational choices that Kentucky moonshiners made during the Depression or, for that matter, that Pennsylvania mountaineers made during Washington's time when they participated in the Whiskey Rebellion?

Because the narcotics trade is driven by seemingly unquenchable demand in the developed countries, production cutbacks in one place lead almost immediately to expansion somewhere else. This is what happened in the 1990s when reduced production in Peru and Bolivia led to soaring production in Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela. It is probably what will happen with the opium trade as well, now that the Taliban have managed to radically reduce production in Afghanistan.

It is tempting to treat the crisis of the world's mountain peoples as someone else's concern. Geopoliticians can cite good reasons for not taking a hand in addressing problems in Karabakh, Kashmir or Kyrgyzstan, or for treating the chaos in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Chechnya or Colombia as beyond the capacities of any one country or group of countries to solve. An extreme form of this approach is "to build a fence" around the trouble spot, as the United States sought to do with Afghanistan in the 1990s, or to let the conflict burn out like a fire in an old mine. Considering the modest contributions of many international agencies and donor groups to addressing these issues, it is clear that many of them have also adopted this strategy, even while cloaking their inaction with various and sundry pieties.

The problem with this approach is that it underestimates the degree to which crises in the world's mountain regions affect directly the developed countries and the international order as a whole. Like it or not, the various mountain-related crises have a way of drawing in the major powers—witness how rebel leader Subcomandante Marcos succeeded in eliciting the support of European countries in his crusade on behalf of Chiapas' mountain folk, or how both China and India are coming to see the struggle in Nepal's mountains as a test of their own voice in that country's affairs. As outside powers are drawn in, their separate interests often collide in ways that can destabilize international relations on a global scale. Local problems in the Balkans and Kashmir have turned those regions into international flash points of the first mag-

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nitude. A similar process may be underway in Afghanistan, as China and India both rush to forge links with opposing sides in that conflict. China is now helping the Taliban restore old power plants and is re-examining the possibility of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Taliban territory, while India is actively supporting Ahmed Shah Masoud's Northern Alliance with arms.

Even the most modern armies are poorly suited to wage war in mountain regions. As every American "revenoor" found out to his regret, as the British discovered a century and a half ago in Afghanistan, as the czarist army learned during the decades it spent fighting the rebel Shamil, and as the Russians are still learning in Chechnya today, even large numbers of modern warriors can be fought to a standstill by poorly-armed but mobile mountaineers doing battle on their own territory. Any government that thinks it can bludgeon mountain people into submission is engaging in a most destructive form of self-deception.

CAN ANYTHING be done, then? For most of the 20th century the typical way to address an issue of this magnitude was to governmentalize it and direct richly funded programs toward its solution. This is what the United States did with the Tennessee River valley in the 1930s with the Tennessee Valley Authority and then in the 1950s in Afghanistan's Helmand Valley, where it successfully created a massive system for water control and irrigation on the TVA model. It is what Turkey is attempting to do today with its restive Kurdish southeastern provinces. Such an approach can bring about fundamental change, but such change is not necessarily for the good. It runs the risk of leaving behind the affected populace, alienating people and driving them into passive or even active opposition when what is needed is to engage and involve them. Moreover, such a "top down" approach is fundamentally undemocratic, treating mountain people as objects to be acted upon rather than as the self-governing citizens they aspire to be.

The fact that the same criticism can be leveled against governmental social policies directed toward many other populations does not make the resulting problem for mountain peoples any less severe. On the contrary, the traditions of isolation and self-sufficiency that prevail among mountaineers make them react all the more negatively, and at times violently, to "top down" approaches.

Until the problems of mountain peoples are correctly diagnosed, effective prescriptions are impossible. It cannot be denied that differences over religion, political loyalties, ethnicity, inter-clan rivalries, territorial claims and a hundred other issues as seemingly minor as the cut of one's mustache or beard have all played a role in the conflicts that rack mountain societies worldwide. But all of these can and have been resolved in times when the people involved are able to feed themselves, carry on their traditions, and participate, if only minimally, in the good life as they perceive it. For millions of mountaineers today these are merely dreams fed by radio or television, and the prospects of ever fulfilling them recede year by year. This is the bitter, rocky soil from which sprouts every mountain conflict in today's world.

The solution to the global crisis of mountain peoples is therefore startlingly simple to conceive, albeit hard to do: promote development. Ask the most battle-hardened Colombian from the highlands, an Afghan from Kandahar, or a Nepalese from Tansen, and they will all agree that their first need is to escape from poverty. As clearly as any economist from the World Bank, they understand that this means development of their capacity to

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provide for their families; development of access to education and training relevant to their needs; development of their ability to tap even minimally into the benefits of modern life while preserving valued aspects of their local traditions and natural environment; and, above all, development of their ability to fill or create jobs that will give them the wherewithal to achieve these goals.

Few, if any, mountain people today think this can be accomplished by returning to the past. Nor are they prepared, unless forced by desperation, to throw over everything they know in order to start an unknown life with unknown prospects in some far-off city. What most want is the ability simply to adapt their traditional way of life to modern circumstances, and thereby to build peaceful and secure conditions for their families.

Can this be accomplished in remote mountain regions, especially in grim conditions of economic collapse and civil strife? There are ample grounds for skepticism. The United States has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on large-scale rural development projects abroad that apply a "one size fits all" approach to rural poverty, whether it occurs in plains, valleys or mountains. So have other governments, foundations and international agencies, and they, too, have little or nothing to show for their efforts. Some schemes have been killed by waste, corruption and outright theft, but far more have succumbed to what might be called the disease of "grandomania"—the false notion that there is a "silver bullet" that will transform basic conditions in a single stroke. Such grand schemes usually take the form of large and costly projects that look good in annual reports but accomplish little on the ground.

Fortunately, a better model exists and has been successfully tested in several mountain zones. This model often begins with emergency humanitarian relief but then shifts into hands-on assistance carried out at the village level. It works best when performed by carefully trained and closely supervised local men and women with a minimum of help from costly foreign consultants. They might rebuild roads, install small hydroelectric generators, or create infrastructures for ecotourism, but the most fruitful efforts are focused on more modest tasks, like helping to dig village irrigation ditches, setting up self-sustaining tree nurseries, upgrading seed grains, improving animal husbandry, or teaching rudimentary accounting to women who manage credit organizations. Not surprisingly, the Swiss government is one of the best practitioners of this work. Working with villagers living near the impressive walnut groves in Kyrgyzstan's Jalalabad district, they are creating the basis for a viable nut and lumber business.

This hands-on, village-based model of mountain development has been refined over two decades in the forbidding environment of Pakistan's Northern Areas, that part of Kashmir adjoining Afghanistan and China that was assigned to Pakistan at the time of the Indian partition. Here, in parched valleys beneath the 23,000 foot-high peaks of the Karakorum Mountains, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) has wrought a fundamental turnaround. Where formerly there was abject poverty, drug dealing and near-total illiteracy, there are now stable agricultural communities, an honorable level of subsistence, self-funded microcredit institutions and cottage industries. Nearly every village has its own school, built by the villagers themselves. Not only do they collect money to pay the teachers' salaries, but the villagers pay to send young men and women from the communities to Karachi for further study so they can return and become teachers.

The AKDN has extended this work into the Pamir Mountain region of

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Tajikistan, only recently the scene of civil war and the main transit route for drugs from nearby Afghanistan. In a mere decade this formidable area of somber granite and glaciers at 15,000 feet, dubbed "The Roof of the World", has become self-sustaining in agriculture for the first time in a century. Fighting has stopped. Drug trafficking is down. Similar efforts have begun in the adjacent region of Afghanistan.

All this costs money, of course. Fortunately, Japan, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and major public and private donor agencies and foundations have been willing to invest in this transformation. Yet how much are these millions of dollars compared with the vast costs of fruitless mega-projects elsewhere, the billions the United States is paying to interdict drugs in the Americas, or the high price of conflict and misery that have been averted?

These successful initiatives prove that the key to successful development in impoverished mountain regions is not money but brains. To replicate these models in Afghanistan, Karabakh, Chiapas, the Balkans, Ecuador, Nepal, Chechnya, Kashmir or Colombia requires scores of men and women with practical skills, local knowledge—what James C. Scott calls *metis*[2]—and subtle leadership abilities. It requires a kind of mountain development entrepreneur who is capable of filling existing jobs in mountain areas and of creating new enterprises and jobs for others. It is precisely such people who are lacking, and whose absence drives mountain people to take desperate and sometimes self-destructive measures.

Back in 1859 the founders of Berea College in Kentucky realized the need for such men and women and created the world's first institution of higher education devoted explicitly to serving people in that "neglected part of the country" defined by mountains. In August 2000, the presidents of Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and His Highness the Aga Khan joined forces to establish the University of Central Asia. Its mission is to prepare leaders and entrepreneurs in mountain development, not only for Central Asia but for all the world's mountain regions. When the day comes that Afghanistan, or any other strife-ridden mountain country, is ready to move forward once more, local UCA graduates will be there to help.

Critics ask if this focus on economic development makes sense so long as the political situation remains unresolved, as in Kashmir, when paramilitary bands roam the hills, as they still do in Tajikistan, and when terrorists from mountain regions imperil the peace in neighboring lands, as they do from Afghanistan in several countries of Central Asia. They claim that the politics must be set right first, so that economic renewal can follow. The problem with this approach is that it usually mires in unsuccessful efforts at peacemaking while the conditions fanning mountain conflicts grow ever worse. Far better is to pursue both courses together, or even to lead with humanitarian aid and economic renewal in mountain areas so as to provide living models of what could be achieved through self-help under conditions of peace.

We may blame the terrorist, drug dealer, local warlord, the farmer who raises coca or poppies, the head of an old-style mining firm that exploits equally the land and its people, or the regional governor who steals from the public till. But spending time and money hounding down every one of these purported villains will not improve the lot of most mountain folk. A fresh crop of villains will quickly emerge to replace those who are removed.

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[2]Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

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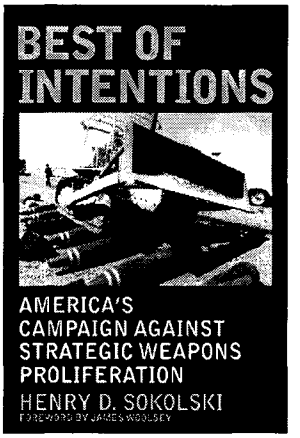
Nor will things change for the better until mountain populations themselves take the lead in improving their lives. As this happens, ethnic and religious assertion may lose its appeal as an answer to despair, the apocalyptic messages of religious extremists will fall on deaf ears, and flight to the city will cease to be the sole or best avenue to self-improvement. Practical experience has shown that bench-level programs of economic and social development can lead mountain people to this critical discovery about their own powers. At that point they will themselves become effective agents of improvement in the political and civic realm.

That is why the UN has proclaimed 2002 the "Year of the Mountains." It hopes to convince international agencies, foundations and donor countries that such programs work. If and when such programs of mountain development are extended to all the major zones of crisis, the world's mountain territories will cease to be regions of despair and conflict and become, if not Shambhala, then at least areas where healthy human communities can sustain modern economies amid settings of timeless beauty and majesty. □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Another Year of Living Dangerously?

Rajan Menon

INDONESIA IS staggering like a heavyweight boxer who has absorbed too many blows in too many places. A faltering economy, a fractious and feeble central government, communal war and secessionism could culminate in the state's collapse and the country's fragmentation. The result would be more than a local disturbance, for Indonesia is no ordinary place.

With 224 million people Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous state, a sprawling archipelago of 13,600 islands (3,000 of them inhabited) nearly three times the size of Texas. While 87 percent of its citizens are Islamic (no country has more Muslims), Indonesia is a kaleidoscope of nationalities, tribes, languages and dialects. The sea lanes that cut through this island constellation—the straits of Malacca, Sunda and Lombok—connect the Asia-Pacific to Europe and the Persian Gulf, bringing the lifeblood of energy and raw materials and providing an outlet for its manufactured exports. Now that globalization has diminished the distinction between "there" and "here", the disruptions that East Asia's largest economies would suffer if shipments are blocked or delayed will reverberate worldwide. Indonesia is also a fragile democracy in trouble and a humanitarian disaster-in-waiting that threatens to upend the strategic circumstances of Southeast Asia. Obviously, then, the U.S. stake in Indonesia's future is enormous.

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The Political Economy of Chaos

THE 1997 EAST Asian economic crisis illustrated globalization's power as both opportunity and vulnerability—this everyone by now understands. What remains unclear is why Indonesia alone has been rocked to its foundations when every other Asian country hurt by the 1997–98 crisis has recovered its balance to one degree or another. The basics of its economy were sound, and for nearly three decades Indonesia experienced an economic and social transformation that bettered the lives of most of its people. Between 1970 and 1997 the percentage of those in poverty fell from 60 percent to 15 percent, life expectancy and literacy increased significantly, and an urban middle class arose. Revenue from oil exports enabled the expansion of infrastructure and social services, and the share of GDP accounted for by the production of natural resources then shrank as industrialization advanced. Non-Javanese peoples in outlying areas and students, workers, and democrats chafed, the disparities in

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wealth and power among classes and regions were wide, and cronyism, nepotism, and corruption were rife. But the "New Order" (the authoritarian edifice Suharto built after taking power in 1965) promoted growth and kept order.

The 1997 economic crisis was its death knell. Indonesia's GDP plummeted from $250 billion to below $100 billion at the end of 1998, and inflation rocketed to 60 percent. Capital fled abroad, millions were pushed deeper into poverty, and the dreams of others whose lives had improved during the decades of rapid growth were dashed. The absence of democratic institutions led simmering dissatisfaction to boil over onto the streets.

Political consequences soon followed. Suharto was forced out in May 1998, and his successor, B.J. Habibie—ineffectual and compromised by his long association with Suharto—proved a political hiccup. In October 1999, following parliamentary elections, Indonesia's highest legislative body, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR, the *Mejelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*, comprising the 500-member parliament plus representatives from the military, the provinces, and civic organizations) elected Abdurrahman Wahid president, and, after Wahid nominated her, chose Megawati Sukarnoputri as vice president.

Something like a democracy emerged. But the change accelerated instability. Indonesia's non-Javanese minority peoples saw an opening to assert their rights. East Timor broke free, but not before being brutalized by the Indonesian armed forces and its paramilitary acolytes. Long-established separatist movements in Aceh and West Papua (Irian Jaya) have gained confidence and new converts. Maluku and Sulawesi are now venues for horrific violence between Muslims and Christians. Kalimantan's Dayaks and Malays have set upon settlers from Java and Bali, forcing survivors to flee. Lombok and Riau have also experienced unrest. These upheavals have saddled Indonesia with a million internal refugees that local governments struggle to house and feed as the hospitality of permanent residents gives way to resentment. Indonesia's descent into communal violence included anti-Chinese riots (pogroms would not be too strong a term to describe them), which accelerated the flight of capital, for ethnic Chinese, while only three percent of the population, control almost three-quarters of Indonesia's wealth.

Indonesia's odds for survival would be increased by a broad economic recovery that attracts capital back into the country and that gives people in rebellious regions a stake in national unity. There are some encouraging signs. The economy, which contracted by 15 percent in 1998, stabilized in 1999 and grew by five percent in 2000. Inflation, which stood at 60 percent in 1998, dropped to just below seven percent in 2000. The flight of capital fell sharply, foreign exchange reserves amounted to $22 billion in 2001, domestic investment has picked up, and exports have grown. And the International Monetary Fund is on hand with advice and $5 billion in loans, though not a few Indonesians are leery of its standard cures—and who can blame them?

But this sliver of a silver lining frames a large dark cloud. Indonesia's banks and companies bear an external debt of $65 billion, but corporate restructuring and reform proceed at a snail's pace.[1] The

[1]Consider the Indonesian Bank Restructuring Agency (IBRA), whose attempts to reorganize insolvent banks and industries are hamstrung by the political clout they gained during the New Order's crony capitalism. IBRA has been unable to sell their assets and to change owners and managers; those who mismanaged these enterprises in many cases retain control. IBRA has been confined to arranging limited debt-equity swaps, easing repayment schedules for

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tepidity of reform explains why Indonesia ranks second worst in the Asia-Pacific in the quality of corporate governance and third worst in transparency.[2] These dubious honors have hardly increased business confidence: ING Barings has warned investors away from Indonesia (as well as Malaysia and Thailand); Standard and Poor's revised Indonesia's creditworthiness downward sharply.

Meanwhile, the steps that the Wahid government took to devolve power to the provinces, essential to keep Indonesia whole, may heighten investors' concerns. As of January 2001, provinces and districts keep 80 percent of mining, forestry and fishing revenues and 15 percent and 30 percent respectively of natural gas and oil income and also have rights to borrow independently. Western mining and energy companies, already facing demands from provincial authorities for a share of equity, worry about a profusion of power and corruption unmatched by competence, conflicting lines of authority, increased taxation by local authorities, and additional twists in an already labyrinthine legal system. Mining companies are particularly loath to make new investments, and their mood could influence other corporations. For their part, the IMF and the World Bank fret that provinces will be profligate with their newfound freedom to borrow.

Nor is Indonesia's outlook positive when gauged by the standard economic indicators. The projected GDP growth rate for 2001 has been revised down to 3.5 percent from 5 percent. Actual growth could be even lower if political ferment continues. The national debt is about as large as the size of the economy. The budget deficit is 6.5 percent of GDP, and the IMF wants it cut to 3.5 percent. The government announced deep cuts in subsidies for electricity and oil in 2001 to achieve the goal, but the frailty of the central government may make further stringency infeasible. Without a smaller budget deficit, inflation, 6.8 percent in 2000, is expected to reach 8.5 percent or worse by the end of 2001. The rupiah, which stood at 6,800 to the dollar in 1999 (about a third of its value in 1996), fell to 11,000 in early 2001 and reached 12,000 in May, the lowest level in almost three years. Its descent makes deficit reduction harder still and could also stoke inflation. Indonesia's reserves of $22 billion look impressive, but that sum is insufficient to defend the faltering currency. Interest rates could be raised to support the rupiah, but that would increase the government's interest payment on the debt. These discouraging signs have not escaped investors. Capital outflows, while far smaller than in 1998, were still $4 billion in 2000. New foreign direct investment, $10 billion in 1996, has essentially ceased, as has portfolio investment.

Nor do global economic conditions augur well for Indonesia's recovery. Economic growth in America, a major market for Indonesia's exports, is slowing. Japan, another important customer and the key source of direct and portfolio investment, is in far deeper trouble; its corporations have canceled new investments in Southeast Asia and laid off workers in Indonesian subsidiaries. Europe cannot take up the slack, while China is a major competitor to Southeast Asia for foreign investment and exports. If the global economic slowdown reduces oil prices, Indonesia's treasury will lose $50 million for every one-dollar drop; deficit reduction will then be harder still

loans, and advancing new loans at a discount. Having raised the capital it needs for these remedies with multi-billion dollar bond issues, IBRA itself skates on thin ice.

[2] "A Survey of Asian Business", *The Economist*, April 7, 2001, pp. 4,16, citing rankings by Economic and Political Risk Consultancy.

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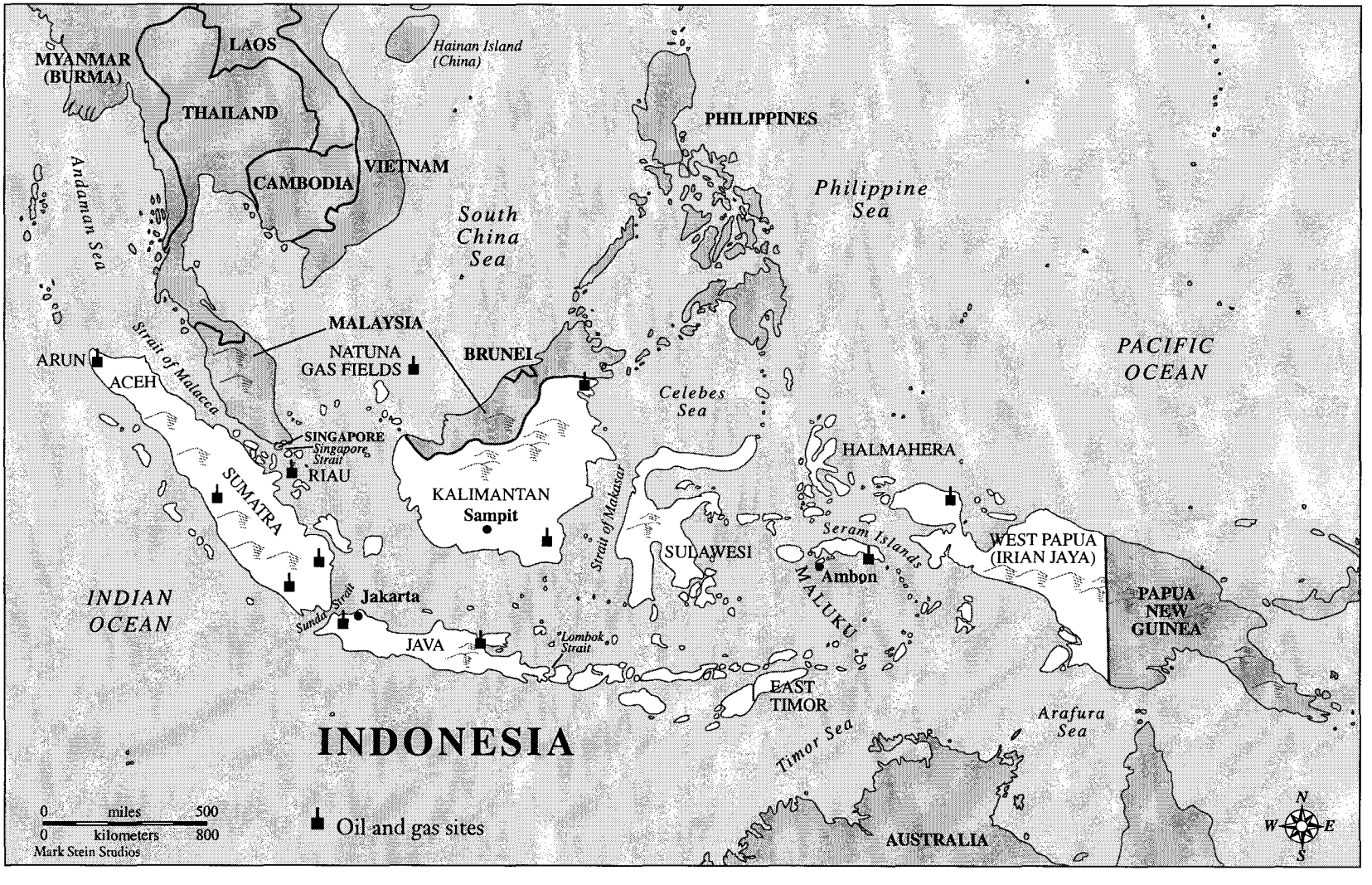

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and inflation could rise. Indonesia's convulsions cannot be reduced to economic causes, but they will prove impossible to manage, let alone cure, if the economy deteriorates further—and despite the brave front of Indonesian officials, the economic outlook is bad.

Family Feud

IN INDONESIA, as elsewhere, communal conflict accompanied the state's attempt to create national unity from ethno-linguistic diversity. Heterogeneity typifies Indonesia, even when it comes to Islam. Indonesian Islam has many doctrinal and regional variations, so it both unites and divides. Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and animists—and a mosaic of languages and dialects, tribes and nationalities—add to the multiformity, which sharpens its political edge on the stones of geography. The separation imposed by a scattered multitude of islands has fostered separateness and has been the ally of exterior areas to whom the central government in Jakarta is the distant symbol of Javanese dominance. This is well illustrated by the case of Aceh, on the northern tip of Sumatra, which now presents the biggest challenge to Indonesia's territorial integrity.

The Dutch gained Aceh under the 1824 Treaty of London by agreeing to abandon their imperial dreams in India and to vacate Singapore in exchange for Britain's acceptance of Dutch control of regions to the south. Under the accord, Aceh, with its long history as a maritime sultanate, was to remain independent. When the Dutch decided to put an end to its rising power in 1873, war broke out. The Dutch did not prevail until 1903, and resistance lingered for years thereafter. Nor were Acehnese disposed to join Indonesia (molded into its current shape by the conquests and cunning of Dutch colonialism) when it became independent in 1949. For Javanese elites at the helm of post-colonial Indonesia, territorial consolidation was part of national liberation; to the Acehnese it was another hostile takeover. Nor did Aceh share the secular aspirations of the Javanese elite; the support it lent to the Dar ul-Islam ("House of Islam") rebellion (which originated in western Java and sought an Islamic state in Indonesia) was proof of that.

Ironically, Islam, Indonesia's greatest common denominator, contributes to the estrangement between Aceh and Jakarta. The Acehnese embraced Islam in the 13th century, long before the populations in the rest of what is now Indonesia did so. Acehnese Islam lacks the Hindu, Buddhist and animist strains of Islam elsewhere in Indonesia; it is distinct and more central to community and identity, and secularism's mark in Aceh is fainter. Aceh's distinctive language and literary tradition reinforce feelings of separateness. Although diversity can in principle be managed by devolution, the central government did not honor a 1959 agreement making Aceh a "special territory" with extensive cultural autonomy. State-sponsored migration by Javanese and others into Aceh and the belief of the Acehnese, now four million in number, that their energy revenues are diverted to benefit outsiders, helped turned alienation into nationalism. Independence has become a panacea of mythic proportions for these grievances.

Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM or Free Aceh Movement), formed in 1976, arose against this background and was quick to declare Aceh independent. Yet proclamations require power to become reality; by the late 1970s, Indonesian military offensives and mass arrests of suspected members and sympathizers decimated GAM. Yet Suharto's New Order never addressed the sources of Acehnese disaffection and, by the late 1980s, GAM was back. Jakarta launched "Operation Red Net" to destroy

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it; the armed forces received carte blanche and two thousand people had been killed by 1992. Others disappeared or were tortured. Red Net only increased GAM's popularity, however, and became another milestone in the consolidation of Acehnese nationalism. Memories of the depredation, and the conviction that the military must be held accountable for it, remain strong.

The fall of Suharto and the subsequent independence of East Timor boosted GAM's spirits. Many of its leaders returned from abroad and started recruiting fighters. The number of GAM's forces is uncertain (estimates range between 850 and 5,000) as is the source of its weapons and training.[3] Its arms appear to come from Cambodia through Thai and Malay ports to Sumatra's coast, and from the Islamist Pattani Liberation Organization (PULO) in southern Thailand. Some GAM guerrillas were apparently trained in Libya in the 1980s.

What is clear is that GAM now controls much of Aceh. At night, Banda Aceh, the capital, is desolate: civilians fear getting caught in the crossfire between GAM and the security forces and interrogation and abuse by the latter. With GAM omnipresent in the countryside, Jakarta's government bureaucrats have joined the many non-Acehnese escaping the region. GAM's influence has grown in southern Aceh as well, where its roots have been weaker. Some 70,000 Acehnese have moved north and now live in makeshift refugee shelters, their migration prompted by a combination of loyalty to GAM, worry that disobedience could bring retribution, and fear of Indonesian security forces.

GAM has demonstrated its power in dramatic ways. In March it forced Exxon-Mobil to close three gas fields in Aceh following kidnappings of a senior employee, grenade attacks on pumping stations, sabotage of pipelines, bombings, and gunfire directed at its buses and at a company aircraft. The closure cut supplies to the nearby Arun liquefied natural gas plant and halted shipments from there to Japan and South Korea that net Indonesia over $1.2 billion a year. Exxon-Mobil prepared to resume production in July, and Indonesia supplied Japan and South Korea with gas from sources in Kalimantan. But GAM had made its point.

The prospects for a settlement in Aceh are poor for several reasons. Talks in Geneva between Indonesian and GAM representatives since June 2000 have produced only ineffectual ceasefires. War rages; 2,000 people have died since 1998. Sensing victory, GAM insists on independence. From his Stockholm exile, its leader, Hasan di Toro, condemns the Javanese as "barbarians", while Abdullah Syafie, its military commander, sniffs that Indonesia "no longer exists."[4] Each side accuses the other of manipulating ceasefires to infiltrate forces into Aceh. GAM is divided among militant fight-to-the-finish nationalists, those who see war as a means to a negotiated agreement, and others who use it for extortion and protection rackets. Nor can its political leaders count on field commanders accepting an agreement that falls short of total independence.

Separatism has also advanced in West Papua, a vast expanse with two million inhabitants, 2,000 miles east of Jakarta. West Papua's indigenous people, Melanesian and predominantly Christian or animist, have been reduced to 50 percent of the population by the influx of

[3]On GAM, see Vaudine England, "Breaking Away", *The New Republic*, January 10, 2000; and Dini Djalal, "A Bloody Truce", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 5, 2000.

[4]Quoted in John McBeth, "Indonesia: Worse To Come", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 29, 1999.

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mainly Muslim immigrants from elsewhere in Indonesia, with 700,000 arriving from Java and Sulawesi during the first 25 years of the New Order alone. West Papua has stronger ethnic and cultural ties with neighboring Papua New Guinea (where there is much support for West Papuan independence) and the other Melanesian islands of the South Pacific than with other Indonesians. The demographic transformation, therefore, has fed Papuan nationalism, the more so because of the Javanese elite's tendency to regard Papuans as an inferior lot to be governed from afar. Like the Acehnese, Papuans want control over their resources: gold, copper, oil, land and forests. These resources, they believe, are exploited by American, British, Australian, European and South African companies and their Javanese partners in ways that provide little employment but disrupt Papua's tribal societies and despoil its landscape. As in Aceh, these grievances have generated a robust nationalism, albeit one that is less cohesive and organized. Its symbol is the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM or Free Papua Organization), which has fought for a West Papuan state since 1965.

Like many Papuans, OPM regards the 1963 Dutch transfer of West Papua to Indonesia as invalid, insisting that Papua declared independence in 1961 while under Dutch rule. It also deems illegitimate West Papua's formal incorporation into Indonesia in 1969, following a referendum whose terms—local leaders were handpicked by the central government to cast the vote—produced the outcome sought by the Suharto regime. This path to incorporation and Jakarta's heavy-handed rule in West Papua ensured OPM a ready supply of recruits. During the military's counterinsurgency campaigns (which involved forays into Papua New Guinea) suspected OPM sympathizers were arrested, with some dying in custody, and civilians suffered various forms of abuse. As in Aceh, the political disarray in Indonesia after 1997 enabled OPM and other groups, such as Satgas Papua, to intensify the struggle, and battle lines are being drawn. A Papuan nationalist conclave declared the territory independent in June 2000. Jakarta then increased the number of military and police personnel in West Papua from 8,000 to 12,000, and hard-liners among them set about organizing militias opposed to independence. East Timor's past could be West Papua's prologue.

Other sites of instability in Indonesia often differ from Aceh and West Papua in that they display communal violence born of a more inchoate nationalism. Maluku, the archipelago comprising the fabled Spice Islands, is an example. Unlike Indonesia as a whole, Maluku, with a population of two million, has a roughly equal proportion of Christians and Muslims. (This, as in West Papua, reflects colonial-era missionary zeal, but also the prior legacy of Arab, Portuguese, British, and Dutch traders.) The demographic balance is the result of immigration, which has taken on deadly consequences. Maluku's Christians resent Muslims who have streamed in from elsewhere in Indonesia under the state-directed resettlement policy. An economic and social divide has emerged and increased discontent: the Muslims, more prosperous, worked in commerce and favored the north; Christians, farmers and fishermen, tended to concentrate in the south.

Unrest erupted in early 1999 and Maluku is now awash in clashes and bombings. Christians have attacked Muslims, local Muslim militias have formed, and others, such as the Laskar Jihad, have arrived from Java to defend their co-religionists, adding to the mayhem. The military and local police are unable to suppress the paramilitary groups; worse, the army appears partial to

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Muslims, the police sympathetic to Christians. Consequently, no neutral force exists to bring order. The melée of sectarian carnage has been particularly gruesome in Ambon (the capital) and on Halmahera and Seram islands. As many as 10,000 have died, and some 500,000 others have been chased from their homes, many becoming refugees in north Sulawesi (where the local population is growing resentful). Maluku's Muslims and Christians now conduct life's quotidian routines in segregation; those from one faith who venture into areas inhabited by the other risk death. Mundane arguments spark rampages in which confessional affiliation becomes the sole distinction between friend and foe.

Indonesia's now-familiar piles of corpses and streams of refugees are also visible in Kalimantan. Encouraged as in other instances by government programs to relieve Indonesia's most crowded islands and to provide labor for foreign investment projects, Madurese migrants poured in, some 100,000 in the 1980s alone. Kalimantan's Dayaks and Malays saw the *arrivistes* make economic gains and take government jobs. Jakarta's efforts to develop Kalimantan might have gained Dayak and Malay support, but insensitivity to property rights, the environment, and established social arrangements focused local attention on the unequal distribution of gains and the loss of control to outsiders. When the New Order began to teeter, spasms of violence gripped central and west Kalimantan. The latest episode of bloodletting occurred in the town of Sampit in February and March. Dayaks decapitated Madurese, displayed their heads on staves, and burned their homes and businesses to the ground. Tens of thousands of Madurese fled to other parts of Kalimantan; 60,000 others escaped the island aboard Indonesian navy vessels.

Kalimantan's orgy of bloodletting is not a simple product of religious and ethnic hatred, although that emotion is certainly present. As in Aceh and West Papua, social transformations with internal and external origins and the fall of Suharto's regime provided the context. Moreover, Christian and Muslim Dayaks joined Muslim Malays to attack Muslim Madurese. Although the unrest in Kalimantan and in Lombok and Sulawesi (also scenes of clashes between Muslims and Christians) highlights the central government's feebleness and could speed Indonesia's collapse, secessionism is not the main motif in these areas. But the nascent nationalism in Riau province, Indonesia's Malay heartland, is more worrisome in that regard.

Riau is Indonesia's largest oil producing area and a major site of Singaporean investment, yet it is one of Indonesia's poorest regions, with 40 percent of its four million people living in poverty. The familiar combination of cultural distinctiveness and the feeling that local wealth does not benefit local people is incubating an angry nationalism in Riau. The implications of secession spreading to Riau are enormous—and not just for Indonesia. Unrest in Riau has already led to a sharp reduction in oil production by Caltex Pacifica Indonesia, owned by Chevron and Texaco. Furthermore, Riau covers a large swath of Sumatra's littoral that overlooks the Malacca Strait, the world's most important shipping channel, which is made narrower by thousands of Riau's islands that clutter its southern end.

The State of Failure

A STATE CAPABLE of knitting concord from discord, implementing (not merely proclaiming) reform, and restoring order is what Indonesia has needed to stanch the economic crisis, secessionism and communal butchery that increasingly

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threaten to undo it. Alas, such a state is precisely what Indonesia has lacked. What it had from October 1999 to July of this year was a tragicomic government personified by President Abdurrahman Wahid. Virtually blind, frail and given to inconsistent Delphic utterances, he became the feckless leader of an entropic government.

Erudite, a proponent of tolerance and long a respected religious and political leader, Wahid personified the aphorism that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. To preserve Indonesia, he offered ceasefires and autonomy to rebellious regions. The offerings failed to appease separatists, but they did convince the military and both Islamist and nationalist parties that he was destroying the country on the installment plan. Indeed, Wahid's political instincts were peculiar, and sowed confusion. To end Aceh's war, he proposed a referendum, but later depicted the idea as a personal opinion. He decreed that the Morning Star, West Papua's long-illegal banner of independence, could be flown, but only below the Indonesian flag. He continued visiting the Middle East and North Africa as Madurese were being slaughtered in Kalimantan, saying that the chaos was under control and had been exaggerated.

The popular support Wahid enjoyed upon taking up the presidency was eventually shredded by the weakness of Indonesia's economy and the pandemonium that is its politics. Charges of incompetence and allegations of corruption led to censure by the parliament, which summoned a session of the MPR in 2001 to remove him, advancing the conclave from August to July once Wahid threatened extreme measures. With the armed forces and the police refusing to support him, Wahid's threats to declare an emergency, suspend parliament and call new elections proved mere bluster. He stood friendless in Jakarta's political arena and was replaced by Megawati Sukarnoputri, with whom his relationship can most charitably be described as having been frosty. Wahid's political demise was a foregone conclusion—to everyone but himself—and his efforts to cling to office by threatening martial law and hinting at demonstrations by his supporters combined pathos with political psychosis.

But Indonesia's summer struggles were far more than petty intrigue. They could have turned violent, making Indonesia a war zone at both its periphery and its center. All of the principals had (and still have) zealous followers ready to mobilize on their behalf and paramilitary units willing to fight. Neither Megawati nor her Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), had forgotten that the MPR made Wahid president even though his National Awakening Party (PKB) won only ten percent of the seats in parliament in the 1999 elections, compared to the PDI–P'S 30 percent. Megawati also has a paramilitary group, Satgas PDI–P, the Red Bulls. The 35 million members of Wahid's Muslim organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) saw him as an icon under assault and those within Banser, NU's paramilitary arm, had pledged to die for him. In East Java, Wahid's home region, his supporters attacked the offices of rival parties and threatened their leaders while parliament convened for its censure motions. The country was on edge, and Wahid's defense minister warned of the dangers of a military coup. It is one thing to have Indonesia's far-flung provinces in rebellion; one can imagine a truncated, yet still substantial Indonesia enduring minus some of its most rebellious provinces. But civil war in Jakarta could well have finished off the country, as it nearly did in 1965–66, Indonesia's infamous year of living dangerously.

With Wahid's peaceful departure at the end of July, Indonesia dodged a bul-

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let. Wahid was finished once the military leaders condemned his plan to declare an emergency. But their conduct sprung less from democratic punctiliousness than from the cold-eyed calculation that Wahid was doomed. The military had little reason to rescue him. They blamed him for aggravating separatism. They considered his willingness to discuss investigations into past military misconduct in Aceh and West Papua as both insulting and dangerous, not least because a dragnet could ensnare many senior officers. They regarded his plan to allow the provinces greater control over revenues as tantamount to emasculating the state.

Yet the military leadership bears much responsibility for Wahid's inability to control the armed forces. They joined senior police officers and rallied behind Indonesia's police chief when he refused to quit after Wahid fired him. They worked through Megawati to scuttle Wahid's choice for army commander. The security forces in general are widely thought to be organizing or supporting paramilitary groups, and Laskar Jihad's ability to sail to Maluku fully armed, despite presidential directives to prevent its passage, fed such speculation. Many Indonesians believe that the military has failed, as in Kalimantan, to stop violence with dispatch in order to promote clamor for a strong hand. Such speculation is testimony both to the aura of crisis in Indonesia and to the enormous political power the military has long held. That power has derived from its reserved bloc of parliamentary seats, Suharto's practice of assigning officers to top posts in the provinces, and the territorial command system that makes the army central to the governance of outlying provinces and districts. These practices were slated to end, and thus the military had much to lose—and much to protect.

Megawati's advent offers Indonesia a chance for a fresh start. But it would be foolhardy to assume that Wahid was the nub of the problem. The economy remains in a parlous state, separatism is rampant, bombings are a daily occurrence, the state's inability to provide order has spawned vigilantism in places like Lombok, and the military has emerged politically stronger from Wahid's ouster. The world must wish Megawati well, but her background provides little basis for confidence that she can end the plotting, create consensus, implement economic reforms or avert fragmentation. She entered the Indonesian political arena only in 1993, with her lineage as Sukarno's daughter being her greatest asset. She is short on hands-on experience and has articulated no clear plan of action. She has a large popular following and, because of that, more support in parliament than Wahid, from whose blunders she has presumably learned. But the kingmakers who sacked Wahid are the very ones who maneuvered to choose him over her in October 1999.

Megawati's popularity among poor Indonesians may make economic austerity harder to enact. Nor is it clear that she can break the back of the vested interests that are powerful, wealthy, entrenched and hostile to reform. A staunch nationalist, heir to the creation of her father and a critic of far-reaching autonomy, she may unleash the army against separatists. But that would only hasten disaster and probably kill Indonesia's democracy in the process. Moreover, Wahid's fate shows that the military remains politically potent. What it did to Wahid, it could do to Megawati. No matter who is at the helm, the problems eating away at Indonesia have a long history and defy quick solutions. Megawati is not destined to fail, and her first major speech to the country on August 16 was surprisingly strong and well received. But the euphoria and relief accompanying her accession

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to the presidency, while understandable, are no excuse to let wishes father thoughts.

Shock Waves

INDONESIA MAY survive the combined assault of an ailing economy, deepening separatism, and a failing state. Such an outcome is certainly desirable, but it is not likely. American leaders must therefore brace for the possibility that Indonesia could still collapse in chaos and disintegrate in violence. Alternatively, the current instability could continue until economic recovery and political compromise give rise to a country of a rather different shape and size. With Wahid gone and Megawati in place, this is now somewhat more likely. Even the loss of Aceh and West Papua need not spell national disintegration; without such provinces Indonesia would still retain the critical mass to endure as a state. The second of these denouements is preferable to the first, but both will create strong shock waves.

Indonesia's size and location are the reasons why. The three major straits that slice through it are pivotal passages for the global economy. Malacca is by far the most important, particularly for energy shipments. Some 450 vessels and about 10 million barrels of oil pass through daily, and East Asian demand, driven by China, is expected to rise from 12 million barrels a day in 2000 to over 20 million barrels in twenty years. Japan, China, Taiwan and South Korea would suffer severely and soon if fallout from turmoil in Aceh (at its northern end) or Riau (at its southern end) blocked this passage. Its narrowness, 1.5 miles in the Phillips Channel in the Singapore Strait, and ten miles between Singapore and the Riau archipelago, adds to the danger. The Lombok Strait, which ships use to sail to northeast Asia through the Strait of Makasar between Borneo and Sulawesi, is next in importance, although it handles a far smaller volume of traffic than Malacca and is of negligible importance for energy shipments. The Lombok-Makasar route is, however, a critical corridor for Australia's coal and iron ore exports to northeast Asia and for manufactured exports moving south from there. It is also the most likely detour were Malacca rendered impassable or hazardous. By comparison, Sunda is a minor shipping channel; the consequences of its closure would be minimal for transcontinental trade.

Rerouting Malacca traffic through Lombok would strain the capacity of the world's merchant fleet, increase transportation costs, and create severe bottlenecks. The problems would be even worse if all three straits were unusable and ships had to transit northeast Asia by skirting Australia's northern coast. Market signals would eventually add other carrying capacity but the question is how quickly and smoothly the adjustment occurs, and what the economic and political consequences would be in the meantime. The ramifications of blocked or delayed maritime traffic, or even just panic over the possibility, would spread speedily throughout globalization's many circuits. Insurance rates would rise; coverage may even be denied if underwriters deem the risks excessive. The effects of obstructed energy, machinery and manufactured goods would register in capital markets, short-term investors would be scared off, and the flow of much-needed foreign direct investment into a region still convalescing from the blows of 1997 would slow.

Piracy in the seas around Indonesia would also worsen if the Jakarta government either ceased functioning or were so busy holding the country together that it could not police its waters. The hijacking of ships has increased since Indonesia's upheavals began. There were 113 incidents in its waters in 1999 compared to

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60 the year before, and between January and March of 2001 alone, pirates attacked ships in Indonesian waters 29 times and on nine occasions in the Malacca Strait. The vessels victimized near Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia included several oil tankers and ships carrying aluminum and palm oil. The three countries began to coordinate operations against the menace in 1992, and in 2000 Japan proposed that its coast guard join the effort along with China and South Korea. Yet how serious piracy becomes, and how effective any joint solution is, depends primarily on the extent of Indonesia's stability.

Refugee flows will also accelerate if Indonesia starts to break apart. The refugee population of one million already within its borders will soar, dragging the economy down further and aggravating communal violence. Refugees could also be driven beyond Indonesia into neighboring countries that are neither prepared to receive them nor able to bear the burden of caring for them. Malaysia, which lies across the water from Aceh, has already seen rising illegal immigration from Indonesia, and its officials worry about the social tensions that could result. The refugee problem also figures prominently in Australian and Singaporean discussions of Indonesia.

Indonesia's neighbors have other worries, as well, as they watch this wobbly behemoth. For Malaysia, one is that the Malaysian Islamic Party, already powerful in northern Malaysia, could receive a fillip were militant Islam to become more significant in Indonesia's politics as a result of the turmoil—or were it to dominate its successor states. Thailand and the Philippines, which have breakaway Islamist groups in their southern regions, fear that Indonesia's collapse could produce an undesirable demonstration effect. Papua New Guinea, which borders West Papua, could be swamped by refugees and also face an older problem: incursions from the Indonesian military in hot pursuit of Papuan guerrillas. Singapore and Malaysia have invested in pipelines carrying energy from Riau and from Indonesia's Natuna gas fields (located in the South China Sea between peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak) and are watching nervously. ASEAN, whose economic and political clout has fallen short of members' hopes, will be reduced to a salon if Indonesia, its keystone, crumbles.

Neither is it clear how Japan, China and Australia would react to various scenarios in Indonesia. Few convergent interests unite them, and history has done much to divide them. This augurs ill for cooperation on economic assistance, refugee relief, piracy, or peacekeeping to stem Indonesia's unraveling or to deal with the consequences if that proves impossible. Indeed, anarchy in Indonesia could start a scramble among these states that is driven more by fear, uncertainty and worst-case thinking than by the opportunistic pursuit of advantage. A process leading to sponsorship of competitive proxy proto-statelets that rise from Indonesia's wreckage is an extreme scenario, but cannot be ruled out.

Beyond the general tendency of states divided by suspicion to jockey for position when uncertainty or opportunity prevails, there are other specific motives for intervention. China could be drawn into the fray if Indonesia's seven-million-strong Chinese population, which has often been a scapegoat in times of trouble, were to be victimized. Beijing's increasing concern for secure energy supplies since becoming a net importer in 1993 has already made it more assertive in the South China Sea, and could provide another motive. Given Indonesia's uncertain future, Chinese maps depicting Beijing's jurisdiction over Indonesia's Natuna gas fields are a worrisome portent, particularly for Malaysia and

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Singapore, who envision energy pipelines from this site.

Japan would move cautiously if Indonesia begins to resemble a lost cause, but it depends on Indonesia's straits and owns most of the ships that ply them. Tokyo cannot remain utterly passive if Indonesia's crisis disrupts the Japanese economy, or if others states assert their interests in ways that could do so.

Indonesia's importance for Australia goes beyond the significance of the Lombok-Makasar passage. In a region being shaped by China's growing power, Indonesia, by virtue of its location and size, is central to Australian national security. Its collapse would lay waste to much of Australia's strategic planning.

The consequences of Indonesia's breakup would affect American interests, as well. American energy and raw materials companies (Exxon-Mobil, Texaco, Chevron, Newmont Mining, Conoco and Freeport-McMoRan, among others) operate in Indonesia, particularly in Aceh, Riau, and West Papua, and many of the ships that traverse the Strait of Malacca are American-owned. The United States is also a major trader and investor in East Asia and is to some degree hostage to its fate, especially now that the American economy is slowing. Moreover, if Indonesia fractures, worst-case thinking and preemptive action among its neighbors could upset regional equilibrium and undermine the American strategic canopy in East Asia. The United States has a network of bases and alliances and 100,000 military personnel in the region, and is considered the guarantor of stability by most states—a status it will forfeit if it stands aside as Indonesia falls apart. America's competitors will scrutinize its actions to gauge its resolve and acumen. So will its friends and allies—Australia, Japan, Singapore, Thailand and South Korea—each of whom would be hurt by Indonesia's collapse.

Prevention and Protection

SO WHAT SHOULD the Bush Administration do? Any plan to keep Indonesia whole and to restore its political and economic stability must be multilateral and multi-faceted if it is to have any chance of success. The size of the problem demands shared responsibility among Executive Branch agencies and U.S. allies, while its nature necessitates using multiple means: diplomacy, economic assistance and, more likely than not, military power. The United States should immediately begin regular, intensive consultations with friends and allies in East Asia both to lay the groundwork for future cooperation and to inform its policies with the assessments of states whose geography and history force them to pay close attention to Indonesia's drift.

Even with the best preparation, however, worsening tumult in Indonesia will make uncertainty the only certainty. Policymakers will work in an environment resembling a fast-moving drama whose cast, plot and likely conclusion change continually. Early-warning markers are therefore essential to chart the direction of change, identify qualitatively critical stages, mitigate uncertainty, and clarify choices. These are the critical markers: the effectiveness of ceasefires; the pace and scale of fighting in Aceh, West Papua and Maluku; the degree of disorder in Lombok, West Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Riau; the size and direction of refugee movements; signs that the Megawati government may be as maladroit as its predecessor; the extent of key personnel turnover in the new government; and signs of the military's increasing political role, particularly harbingers of a coup.

There are concrete steps that the United States can take to prepare for crisis. The Indonesian military is in bad

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odor these days because of the havoc it wreaked in East Timor. But, as the Bush Administration appears to understand, this is no time to shun an organization that could decide Indonesia's fate. Washington should use multiple channels to dissuade the Indonesian military from seizing power, for Indonesia is more likely to shatter and to be blood-spattered if the armed forces mount a coup to keep it whole. The United States should send quiet but unequivocal messages that it will not condone a coup and that the military's institutional interests—exchanges, training programs and arms sales involving the United States—would suffer if it attempts one. Economic aid and military sales to Indonesia are now suspended, but the administration should devise a plan to resume the former, both to help stabilize Indonesia and to provide incentives for its leaders to avoid reckless behavior. Nor should the resumption of military sales and contacts with the Indonesian military be ruled out as a tool of diplomacy. The concern for human rights in Indonesia and the revulsion at the military's misdeeds in East Timor are justified and proper. But it should be understood that many more people will die and far-reaching instability will occur if Indonesia explodes. Thus, any means that could help influence the Indonesian military should not be excluded by allowing principle to trump prudence.

Washington should also declare its support for a unified Indonesia, particularly because prominent Indonesians have accused it of conniving to destroy their country. Growing violence in Indonesia will bring human rights to the forefront of American debates, and properly so. But the mechanical application of the principle of self-determination to so large and important a country will assuredly not curb but increase long-term violence and disorder. The United States should also favor settlements in Aceh and West Papua that offer autonomy and address in bold, convincing ways the economic and social problems that feed separatism in these provinces. It must, as a corollary, convey to nationalists in these regions that it will support devolution, but not secession. This is because the proliferation of mini-states in Southeast Asia and the implosion of its most important country will increase poverty and violence and unsettle the balance of power in ways that may cast a long and dark shadow. The United States should therefore help identify the providers of arms and training to separatists and militias in Indonesia and use its influence to cut the supply. To help stabilize the Indonesian economy, the United States should organize a fund to support the rupiah and coordinate a long-term program to rebuild what is a ravaged country.

But the United States should not delude itself. To think that American actions can avert Indonesia's collapse is hubris or folly, possibly both. The problems gnawing away at Indonesia are numerous and complex. They may prove beyond the control of Indonesians, let alone Americans and other outsiders. If Indonesia breaks apart despite efforts at preventive diplomacy, the United States and its partners must develop plans to act on several fronts, together with international organizations. The challenges will include evacuating foreign nationals; keeping the Malacca Strait and the Lombok Strait open in the face of threats that could close them; protecting shipping from sabotage, attack and piracy; guarding and transporting refugees to pre-designated safe stations; stockpiling and conveying supplies for their care; organizing economic aid for post-war reconstruction; promoting ceasefires between government forces and separatist guerillas; and, perhaps, interposing forces between combatants so that ceasefires last and subsequent political negotiations have a chance to succeed.

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The last task raises the critical matter of injecting American military power into a messy civil war—and into a country where anti-American sentiment is rising. Obviously, the United States should contemplate this measure only as a last resort, in concert with other states, and while taking care not to assume the largest obligations on the ground. Despite the dangers, though, Washington should not rule out a military role by invoking Procrustean preconditions. Maxims that recommend committing American forces only if vital interests are at issue, applying overwhelming force, defining a clear objective, and devising quick and clean exit plans seem cogent and compelling. But the confusion attending a blowup in Indonesia will torpedo tidy formulations, as may other civil wars, for that matter. Without the restoration of order and the separation of warring forces, other measures to manage a crisis in Indonesia—whether refugee relief, economic aid, or negotiations—will prove impossible. And if order is absent within Indonesia, it will have to be supplied from without.

The corollary is not that the United States should insert its forces into wars (of any sort) lightly. President Bush's foreign policy advisors correctly emphasize care and restraint in this regard, and one of them, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, has special expertise on Indonesia, where he served as U.S. ambassador from 1986 to 1989. Yet even beyond Indonesia there will inevitably be other civil wars that matter strategically, that are more than purely humanitarian crises. In such cases, military power may have to be part of a multifaceted strategy for restoring order. The choice is not, as one might surmise from recent foreign policy debates, between sending the military and abstention. There is a range of options that combines military power with other policy instruments—and in cooperation with other states and regional and international organizations—and the United States must be creative and flexible enough to devise them conceptually and prepare for them operationally. Its claim to world leadership will be hollow if it ducks such a critical responsibility. □

> In every community there is a class of people profoundly dangerous to the rest. I don't mean the criminals. For them we have punitive sanctions. I mean the leaders. Invariably the most dangerous people seek the power.
>
> —"Moses Herzog",
> Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (1964)

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Sky High

Illusions of Air Power

Conrad C. Crane

THE 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review season is hard upon us, but this year's energies are being expended in a new context. Previous exercises were mainly about preserving Service resource shares in a mostly stagnant intellectual and budgetary environment. This year there is, first and foremost, the major review undertaken by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, a review that promises—or threatens, depending on one's point of view—a significant reallocation of resources among the Services. Additionally, the defense dollars available to the Services for existing missions are being squeezed from two sides: by a large bill for national missile defense, and by a large tax cut. What has not changed is the art of special pleading. Thus have some commentators claimed anew that the NATO bombing campaigns against Yugoslavia in 1995 and 1999 herald a new era of warfare in which precision weapons and airpower alone promise swift and decisive results with little loss of life or collateral damage. As historian John Keegan has put it, not only did the Kosovo campaign demonstrate that "war can be won by airpower alone", it also provided a showcase for the Western world's "superior technology and higher public morality."[1]

It's just not so. On the one hand, the weapons themselves are still hardly free of major glitches, as the failure in February of Navy Joint Standoff Weapons used in attacking Iraqi air defenses showed. Even the newest technology is susceptible to inclement weather, enemy countermeasures or, in this case, just wind.[2] More important than technical problems with the weapons are misconceptions about how tactics accumulate into a strategy for their use. A close examination of the 1999 Kosovo air campaign demonstrates that, talk of humane warfare notwithstanding, air bombardment remains an extremely destructive action that is most effective in achieving strategic goals when targeted against the *civilian* elements of a society.

Unpleasant as this conclusion may be, it should not surprise anyone familiar with military history. It is not uncommon that new technologies which appear to have decisive application on the bat-

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[1]John Keegan, *Daily Telegraph* (London), June 6, 1999, and January 16, 2001.

[2]See David A. Fulghum *et al.*, "Strikes Hit Old Targets, Reveal New Problems", *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, February 26, 2001, p. 25.

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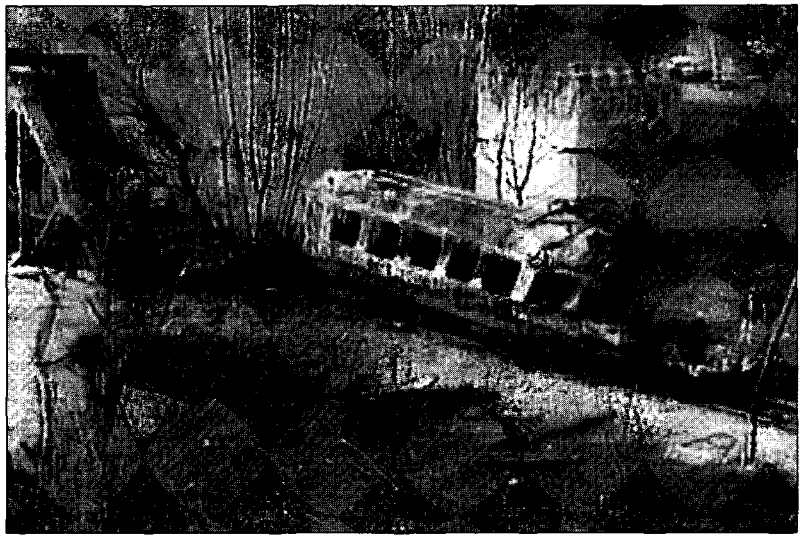

Passenger train destroyed by NATO airstrikes
April 12, 1999

AP Photo

tlefield soon end up being turned upon civilians. In 1870, for example, the Prussians decided that the quickest and ultimately the most humane way to reduce French fortresses was to shell the civilian population with modern artillery until it forced the garrison to surrender. Giulio Douhet incorporated this and similar lessons into his post-World War I theories about bombing cities. American airmen in the 1930s, however, developed a different approach based on the promise of precision attacks. Studying New York City as a model, they concluded that destroying only seventeen targets within its transportation, water and electrical systems would render the city uninhabitable without inflicting mass casualties. They expanded their concept of exploiting key vulnerabilities in the economies of industrialized nations and developed a coherent precision-bombing doctrine that has shaped the evolution and application of American airpower ever since.[3] Resulting Air Corps studies asserted that the principal mission for airpower was "the attack of those vital objectives in a nation's economic structure which will tend to paralyze the nation's ability to wage war", while service school texts proclaimed: "Direct attack of the civil populace is rejected as an air objective due to humanitarian considerations."

Unfortunately, practice has let theory down. Though technology has continued to advance, public expectations and U.S. Air Force promises about airpower's decisiveness and accuracy have advanced faster. As a result, key decisions about the application of military force in most American wars in the air age have been shaped by an overestimation of airpower's effectiveness against military and industrial targets, and disappointing results have led repeatedly to the escalation of aerial operations against civilians—confirming Douhet's theories and confounding America's precision bombing enthusiasts. Such escalations have long-lasting implications. It may be, for example, that current North Korean programs to develop ballistic missiles are motivated by memories of the destruction of most of their cities and towns by American bombing between 1950 and 1953.[4]

[3]On the development of American precision bombing doctrine, see my *Bombs, Cities, and Civilians: American Airpower Strategy in World War II* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), pp. 12–27; and Thomas H. Greer, *The Development of Air Doctrine in the Army Air Arm 1917–1941* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985), p. 53.

[4]See my *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000).

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Recent air operations over Yugoslavia repeated the pattern of the Korean War: anticipatory claims of decisiveness, followed by disappointment, followed by escalation against civilian targets. Frustrated by seemingly interminable peace talks and the failure of aerial interdiction, American airmen adopted a strategy they called "Air Pressure": coercion through the destruction of key dual-use civilian-military targets. These targets eventually included hydroelectric power facilities, almost every city and town in North Korea, and irrigation dams for rice fields. Again in Kosovo there were high expectations for what airpower, along with the newest precision-guided munitions and information warfare, could accomplish. While airpower was in the end the primary offensive arm that produced a settlement without risking U.S. and allied ground casualties, the results were not at all those envisioned when the campaign started.

When the bombing commenced, Pentagon planners and State Department spokesmen admitted that they did not expect airpower alone to force President Slobodan Milosevic to surrender Kosovo. Consequently, President Clinton announced that the operation had three primary objectives: to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo; to prevent an even bloodier Serb offensive against civilians there; and to "seriously damage" the Serb military capacity to do such harm.[5] Bombing did not achieve any of those goals; indeed, it exacerbated the assault against Albanian Kosovar civilians as Serb ground forces responded to the high-tech aerial assault with a low-tech ravaging of the province.

As to seriously damaging the Serb military capacity, NATO peacekeepers subsequently discovered that initial estimates of the degradation of Serbian forces from air attacks were vastly exaggerated, primarily due to extensive Serbian use of decoys and deception. NATO officials quickly reduced initial claims of tanks destroyed from 122 to 93, and were then forced to admit uncovering only 26 "kills" when all was said and done. Yugoslav vehicle commanders, it seems, proved quite adept at hiding in villages, using the surrounding community and inhabitants as human shields.[6]

More generally, whether the air campaign motivated Serbians to eventually remove Milosevic from power in due course, or only strengthened his hand against a fragmented opposition in the short term, is still debated. The latter is more likely. What is clearer is that achieving any of NATO's primary objectives in Kosovo by airpower alone was made more difficult by the gradual escalation of the air attacks, which reinforced, by negative example, the lessons learned about the drawbacks of incrementalism in Vietnam, and ignored the lessons of Operation Desert Storm, a massive air effort that quickly paralyzed Iraqi forces and destroyed their ability to fight.

Such incrementalism, however, was only one aspect of a range of problems caused by the need to create consensus for the air campaign within the 19-member NATO coalition. It now appears that targeting in Kosovo was even more micromanaged by civilians than it was in Vietnam. The political and legal constraints resulting from the alliance's ornate and cumbersome decision system produced rules of engagement for pilots as strict as any seen in the history of war. The intention was to minimize civilian casualties; the result was very different.

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[5]R.W. Apple, *New York Times*, March 25, 1999 (late edition); President Clinton's televised address, March 25, 1999.

[6]Steven Lee Myers, *New York Times*, June 28, 1999; Richard J. Newman, "The bombs that failed in Kosovo", *U.S. News & World Report*, September 20, 1999.

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AP Photo

The Yugoslav Television building in Belgrade
April 25, 1999

Despite the layers of civilian control and the promise of precision weaponry, young pilots searching for targets on four-inch square monitors made mistakes. Fears of Serb air defenses kept aircraft at 15,000 feet or higher and further increased the difficulties of target identification, contributing to the tragic attacks on tractorloads of refugees near Djakova on April 14. The video replay of the accidental destruction of a Yugoslav train passing over a bridge just as it was struck by a NATO missile was highlighted on newscasts around the world. Still the Serbs did not yield. As General Wesley Clark expanded his target lists, the quality of his intelligence declined markedly, leading to further mistakes and episodes of futility. Outdated CIA maps led to the accidental bombing of the Chinese Embassy on May 7, but that was only the most spectacular and telegenic error of many.

These errors undermined support for the air war and put considerable pressure on NATO political and military leaders to achieve quicker political results. Clark was close to running out of militarily useful and politically acceptable targets when he secured approval for probably the most important raid of the campaign. The destruction of the transformer yards of the Yugoslav power grid on May 24 disabled everything from the air defense command-and-control network to the country's banking system. It did demonstrate NATO's strength and dominance to both the political leaders and the civilian population in Serbia, but the price included the sudden cessation of the electrical supply to hospitals and water-pumping stations. Military lawyers made the implications clear to Clark; one recalled, "We'd have preferred not to have to take on these targets. But this was the Commander's call."[7] All major Serb cities experienced extended power disruptions until a settlement was reached on June 10.

The Kosovo campaign thus featured anew many of the persistent shortcomings of American airpower. Gauging the decision-making process, vulnerabilities and will of targeted leaders again proved difficult. Problems with insufficient resources and allied sensibilities first limited the conduct of the air campaign, then propelled a sharp escalation of the assault on dual-use civilian-military targets as the conflict continued. Attempts at aerial interdiction of Yugoslav forces exhibited many of the same shortcomings that

[7]Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000), p. 108.

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plagued operations and frustrated expectations in Korea and Vietnam.

And all this was despite the fact that airpower's efficacy in Kosovo—such as it was—benefited grandly from important assistance supplied by both traditional landpower and diplomacy. While a NATO ground offensive was not employed, open discussions about its possibility, and an apparent growing willingness to gather peacekeeping forces in the region, probably influenced Yugoslav leaders. The KLA was also moderately useful for a time in drawing Serb forces out into the open where aircraft could attack them. The Russians, despite their opposition to the NATO attacks, ultimately played a key role at U.S. behest in persuading the Serbian leadership to accept a settlement. They also assisted NATO by having declined to upgrade Yugoslavia's 1970s-vintage air defense system, for modernized antiaircraft technology would have downed more aircraft and tested coalition solidarity as casualties mounted.

Despite all this, Lt. Gen. Michael Short, joint forces air component commander for the Kosovo campaign, still chose to trumpet the success of air power once Milosevic had capitulated. In a breathtaking statement bespeaking both hubris and error, he averred that "NATO got every one of the terms it had stipulated in Rambouillet and beyond Rambouillet, and I credit this as a victory for air power."[8] This was untrue, not least because the Rambouillet ultimatum demanded NATO access and portage throughout all of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and this was not achieved by the war. As for hubris, let the facts brought above speak for themselves.

IT IS CLEAR that whatever sort of victory NATO's Kosovo air campaign brought, it was not achieved by "plinking" tanks or by causing strategic or operational military paralysis. Despite European attempts to restrain the attacks, a less-than-final settlement was achieved with the same sort of "imposed cost" strategy attempted in Korea and Vietnam, resulting in massive destruction of Yugoslavia's civilian infrastructure. Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon admitted as much when he speculated that the main factor in Milosevic's acceptance of terms "was the increasing inconveniences that the bombing campaign was causing in Belgrade and other cities."[9]

The more precise truth is that a yawningly broad definition of the term "dual-use" opened up a wide array of targets for NATO airmen, including bridges, heating plants and television stations. Black humor in Belgrade had it that even bakeries were valid targets for NATO aircraft because "soldiers also eat bread." When the 78 days of attack on cities, factories, power plants and other targets finally ended, 45 percent of Yugoslavia's television broadcast capability was degraded and a third of military and civilian radio relay networks were damaged. Petroleum refining facilities were completely eliminated. Seventy percent of road and 50 percent of rail bridges across the Danube were down. Destruction is what airpower does best, and it contributed to an enormous Balkan repair bill that the president of the World Bank fears will use up any money available to deal with other humanitarian crises in Asia and Africa.[10]

There is also a good chance that Yugoslav civilian casualties exceeded

[8]Short quoted in *New York Times*, June 18, 1999.

[9]Michael Dobbs, "Post-Mortem on NATO's Bombing Campaign", *Washington Post* National Weekly Edition, July 19-26, 1999.

[10]Ibid. See also "World Bank: Rebuilding Balkans Comes at a Cost", *Chicago Tribune*, July 14, 1999. For statistics see Rebecca Grant, *The Kosovo Campaign: Aerospace Power Made It Work* (Arlington, VA: The Air Force Association, 1999).

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military ones, suggesting that Mr. Bacon's choice of the term "inconveniences" did not quite capture the extant reality. This is particularly ironic considering the expectations for a bloodless war caricatured so well in Doonesbury cartoons and reinforced by NATO briefings on targeting accuracy. High NATO expectations for extremely low casualties on both sides helped convince reluctant coalition members to support the air campaign, and hence increased the political impact of each scene of civilian dead and wounded. Such expectations may also have played some role in persuading UN war crimes prosecutors of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to assess evidence in December 1999 that NATO commanders had violated the laws of war with their air attacks.

Wrongheaded attempts to criminalize military activity aside, we must face the ethical implications of the fact that NATO airpower achieved success only because of the destruction wreaked on civilian infrastructure and the resultant noncombatant casualties. This does not necessarily make the application of such military force wrong; that judgment depends on a calculus—never easy to parse—of the greater and lesser evils to be considered in any given case. But it should dispel all illusions about the surgical bloodlessness of modern military technology, airpower not least.

In our ethical accounting, too, we need to factor in the role of precedent. One nation, in particular, quickly applied Kosovo's lessons on airpower to its own problems. Though they opposed NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia, the Russians soon applied the same tactics against Chechnya, trying to force the withdrawal of Islamic militants without a bloody and unpopular ground war. Russian newspapers declared that "the Kremlin is using the scheme NATO applied in Kosovo", and indeed, the Russian Air Force Commander, Col. Gen. Anatoly Kornukov, conducted NATO-style briefings narrating combat footage of precision munitions striking targets in Grozny.[11] His forces were also conscious of the need to justify the destruction of dual-use targets. Russian aircraft destroyed Chechnya's cellular telephone exchange to prevent the rebels from talking to each other, bombed oil refineries to deprive the rebels of black market revenues, and presumably attacked the television station to stop the transmission of misleading propaganda—just like NATO did. As the damage to the civilian infrastructure and the civilian death toll mounted, more than 100,000 Chechens became refugees fleeing the violence.

INSTEAD OF demonstrating how airpower in limited war allows "righteous" states to restrain transgressors with a minimum of bloodshed on both sides, the Kosovo and Chechen conflicts show how aggressive belligerents with advanced technology can inflict massive destruction on others at low cost to themselves. They also show how modern technology has inclined to merge the civilian and military sectors of society to an unprecedented degree, creating a broader target spectrum that can be justified for attack. Instead of making war less likely and destructive, the power of new "precision strike" technology has done the opposite. It is now much easier to get domestic support to use force when all it requires is to launch a cruise missile or drop a precision bomb, for the expectation is that results will be clean, decisive and above all safe for the attacking side. When the results are neither clean nor decisive, it is easier to escalate a conflict as impatience grows,

[11]Michael R. Gordon, *New York Times*, September 28, 1999.

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especially when there is a considerable technological mismatch between belligerents. So instead of heading for the sort of future envisioned by modern American airpower theorists, in which paralyzing attacks on military structures end wars quickly and with relatively little impact on the civilian sphere, we may be headed for that foreseen by Douhet, in which new weapons decide wars by inflicting maximum distress on civilian populations, which are inherently more vulnerable to the destructive power of modern technology than are military capabilities.[12]

Particularly in lopsided contests, the fact of civilian vulnerability in turn raises the question posed by an anonymous European observer in the aftermath of the Kosovo war: "Now we know what Americans are willing to kill for; but what are Americans willing to die for?" It is a good question, for it gets at the choices and priorities that even great powers cannot—or, at any rate, should not—neglect, even if advanced military technology tempts us into thinking otherwise. Particularly for America, as another contributor to these pages once put it, "even a high-tech military offers no easy escape from the moral ambiguities that remain the lot of an imperial democracy."[13]

This is not a new problem. During World War II, the Army Air Force staff created a model reply to answer any letters they received questioning the humanitarian application of their new technology. One section read:

> We see air warfare as being different only in the range of its potential destruction. The air gives uncurbed bestial instincts a wider field of expression, leaving only humanity and common sense to dictate limitations. Law cannot limit what physics makes possible. We can depend for moderation only upon reason and humane instincts when we exercise such a power.[14]

Would that such moderation and reason came in as ample a supply as the precision weapons in our arsenals. □

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[12]For an exposition on current American airpower theory, see Lt. Col. David S. Fadok, "John Boyd and John Warden: America's Quest for Strategic Paralysis" in Col. Phillip S. Meilinger, ed., *The Paths of Heaven: The Evolution of Airpower Theory* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1997).

[13]A.J. Bacevich, "Morality and High-Tech", *The National Interest* (Fall 1996), p. 39.

[14]"Suggested Reply to Letters Questioning Humanitarian Aspects of Air Force", in *Humanitarian Aspects of Airpower*, Binder, Papers of Frederick L. Anderson, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University.

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Books

Kissinger's Wisdom . . . and Advice

John J. Mearsheimer

Henry A. Kissinger, *Does America Need A Foreign Policy?: Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 318 pp., $30.

WHEN HENRY Kissinger asks *Does America Need A Foreign Policy?*, the question is obviously rhetorical. For a global superpower like the United States, the answer is certainly "yes." But Kissinger has a reason for choosing such a title for his newest book. He means to imply that the United States has not had a coherent and effective foreign policy since the Cold War ended, and that it needs one badly as it enters the 21st century. And it will surprise no one to discover that Kissinger thinks he knows what that foreign policy should be.

It behooves us to pay careful attention to Kissinger's views on foreign policy; few are better qualified to write on the subject. Not only was Kissinger, as both National Security Advisor and Secretary of State, the driving force behind U.S. foreign policy during one of the most tumultuous periods in American history (1969-1977), but he is also a deeply learned man who has written extensively and intelligently about international politics for nearly five decades. Indeed, never has there been a statesman with Henry Kissinger's credentials as a scholar, or a scholar with his credentials as a statesman.

Does America Need A Foreign Policy? is a *tour d'horizon* in which Kissinger analyzes U.S. interests in five regions of the world—Europe, the Western Hemisphere, Asia, the Middle East and Africa—and offers policy prescriptions for each area. Kissinger also devotes separate chapters to globalization and human rights. The most important parts of the book, however, deal with U.S. policy toward Europe and Asia. These two regions, which contain other great powers and in which the United States still maintains a large military presence, are of the greatest strategic importance to America. Hence, Kissinger's emphasis on them is understandable.

Kissinger's prescription is a simple one: the United States must strive to preserve the core alliances it created and

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directed during the Cold War. Regarding Europe, he wants to see a formidable NATO united around a clear strategic purpose, and he therefore advocates maximally harmonious transatlantic relations. In Asia, he recommends maintaining close relations between the United States and Japan. In essence, Kissinger is bent on preserving the Cold War order in Asia and Europe, even though its original *raison d'être*—the U.S.-Soviet rivalry—disappeared more than a decade ago.

Given these goals, it is hardly surprising that Kissinger is distressed by the growing signs that America's diplomatic position is eroding. He is especially disturbed by the situation in Europe, where he sees abundant evidence that the United States and its NATO allies are headed for a messy divorce.

Kissinger is well aware that U.S.-European relations have been plagued by disputes since NATO's inception in 1949. One might even say he wrote the book on this subject 36 years ago, under the apt title, *The Troubled Partnership*.[1] But the current tensions are much more serious, as revealed by the willingness of European leaders to criticize U.S. policy in ways that would have been unthinkable during the Cold War. Thus, Kissinger is dismayed that French President Jacques Chirac, speaking as the representative of the European Union, stood alongside Russian President Vladimir Putin in October 2000 and "attacked the Clinton administration's plan to explore revision of the ABM Treaty." He also finds the EU's recent move to challenge the Bush Administration's hardline policy on North Korea even more egregious. Europeans have become so hostile to America, Kissinger notes, that their identity is now defined largely in terms of an "almost congenital opposition to the United States."

According to Kissinger, these tendencies have been exacerbated by errors on the American side. He accuses U.S. policymakers, especially from the Clinton Administration, of exhibiting "overbearing triumphalism", and being guilty of either "self-indulgence or self-righteousness" when dealing with other states. His distaste for the Clinton team even leads him to a certain sympathy for the anti-American views of French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine. Kissinger cannot bring himself to blame Védrine and others for being irritated when American leaders convey their belief that "the United States was chosen by providence as the 'indispensable nation' and that it must remain dominant for the sake of humankind."

Kissinger also warns that friction within the Alliance has been accompanied by a loss of strategic purpose. Instead of focusing on its traditional strategic mission of protecting its members from an external threat, NATO has become a "mini-United Nations" and a "multilateral mishmash", primarily concerned with "a plethora of multilateral collective security enterprises of vague purpose." NATO may remain in name well into the 21st century, but given its present trajectory, Kissinger doubts that it can remain a serious military alliance for much longer.

The situation is not much better in Asia. Kissinger thinks that "Japanese-American political relations are on the verge of a sea change" due to Japan's growing reluctance to remain a ward of the United States. Japan is already shedding its pacifist veneer and is likely to acquire more formidable military forces and to take greater responsibility for its own defense. Because Americans are accustomed to dealing with a subservient Japan, this process is certain to strain relations between Tokyo and Washington.

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[1]Kissinger, *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).

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Kissinger's explanation for these centrifugal tendencies is straightforward. The taproot of the problem is the collapse of the Soviet Union, which means that the United States and its allies no longer face a serious threat to their security. Consequently, they have no good reason to act according to the hard-nosed dictates of realpolitik. Instead, diplomacy has become the prisoner of misguided domestic political forces, which produce foreign policies that make little strategic sense.

Kissinger blames three groups of domestic actors in particular. The main culprits are the liberal or left-wing elites who believe that power is a dirty word and that the United States, to quote William Jennings Bryan, is "the supreme moral factor in the world's progress and the accepted arbiter of the world's disputes." Thus, liberal idealists advocate a foreign policy that concentrates on promoting human rights around the globe. Unfortunately, a foreign policy based on such blatant self-righteousness invariably generates profound resentment abroad in countries with different cultures and traditions and poisons relations with allies as well as adversaries.

Yet Kissinger is also critical of the right-wing neo-conservative elites who call for the United States to act unilaterally to establish a benevolent global hegemony or Pax Americana. Although he credits them with appreciating the importance of power, he correctly faults their failure to recognize that there are limits even to American power, and that, in any event, other states will not view American hegemony as benevolent. Wielding power unilaterally will encourage the other major powers to join together in a balancing coalition against the United States, "and force it into impositions that would eventually leave it isolated and drained." In short, Kissinger thinks that elites from the Left and the Right are pushing the United States to adopt unilateralist policies that will undermine multilateral institutions, like NATO, that he wants to preserve.

The third villain in this story is the American public. Kissinger emphasizes that the public's interest in foreign policy is at "an all-time low", as revealed by the scant attention that foreign policy issues received in the last three presidential elections. This worries him, because he understands that it is difficult to sustain an intelligent foreign policy without broad-based support in the body politic, a lesson he learned well during the Vietnam War and its debilitating aftermath.

Although Kissinger does not say so explicitly, he surely understands that this public apathy is a dangerous wild card. Elites from both ends of the political spectrum continue to support an activist foreign policy (albeit for different reasons), but the public at large is becoming less supportive of our world-girdling array of global commitments, and it is certainly not interested in global crusades. If the economy erodes and the costs of empire rise, public apathy today could quickly turn into a call to bring the troops home tomorrow.

Of course, given that the Soviet threat is gone and there is no similar sort of adversary in sight, these arguments imply that domestic politics will continue to distort the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and make it impossible for the United States to follow Kissinger's advice. Kissinger backs away from this pessimistic conclusion, however, and offers a single ray of hope. If a smart and clever statesman—a Bismarck or even a young Kissinger—is put in charge of U.S. diplomacy, and if that individual understands the dangers of unilateralist behavior, then the United States might be able to adopt the "ideological subtlety and long-range strategy" that Kissinger advocates.

To be fair, Kissinger recognizes that statesmen are always constrained by the broad structural forces that shape interna-

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tional politics. He drives this point home by quoting Bismarck's famous dictum that, "The best a statesman can do is to listen to the footsteps of God, get hold of the hem of His cloak, and walk with Him a few steps of the way." Nevertheless, Kissinger also believes that individuals can shape history in important ways, and that "great statesmen" can be a powerful force for good on the world stage. Personal diplomacy and leadership skills matter a lot in international politics; given the right circumstances, they might trump the malign structural forces that are currently leading U.S. foreign policy astray.

WHAT IS ONE to make of Kissinger's analysis? On the one hand, his diagnosis of the problem is acute and his concerns about our ability to surmount it are probably justified. On the other hand, his prescription for what to do about it is neither consistent nor persuasive. The Cold War order that he so desperately wants to preserve is doomed to collapse sooner or later—probably sooner—and a foreign policy that fails to recognize this fact is doomed to fail.

A close look at the Clinton Administration's policy toward Europe illustrates the problem nicely. As noted above, Kissinger sees the Clinton team as misguided idealists whose unilateralist policies damaged relations between the United States and its European allies and seriously weakened NATO. The evidence, however, does not support this description of events in the 1990s.

There is no question that the Clinton Administration used highly idealistic rhetoric to justify its foreign policy, and some of its members were irritatingly self-congratulatory. The United States also engaged in a handful of small-scale humanitarian interventions on Clinton's watch, although it did so with great caution. Indeed, the administration turned a blind eye toward the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, which prompt action might well have prevented or ameliorated. As is usually the case with U.S. administrations, realistic calculation trumped idealistic aspiration.

More importantly, however, the Clinton team paid careful attention to the global balance of power and diligently pursued the very policies Kissinger now advocates.[2] The leading lights in the Clinton Administration were unabashed multilateralists who were deeply committed to preserving America's alliances in Europe and Asia. They expanded NATO eastwards, an idea strongly endorsed by Kissinger and most Europeans, and negotiated a new and more extensive security partnership with Japan. Indeed, it is hard to imagine an administration more committed to maintaining the Cold War order.

Despite these efforts, however, transatlantic relations deteriorated steadily over the course of the 1990s and were at an all-time low when Clinton left office earlier this year. Kissinger's description of how Americans and Europeans view each other these days is right on the money. Yet this sad state of affairs is hardly the result of the Clinton team's idealistic rhetoric, since that kind of language is music to the ears of most Europeans. The occasional preaching by Madeleine Albright and others surely irritated many Europeans, especially the French, but not enough to create the present state of disharmony. Furthermore, it is hard to blame the problem on the U.S. penchant for humanitarian interventions, since the Europeans are publicly committed to creating their own force for precisely that purpose. Also, the United States and its NATO allies worked closely—if not always intelligently—over the past decade to curb ethnic violence and protect human rights in the Balkans.

[2]Stephen M. Walt, "Two Cheers for Clinton's Legacy", *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2000).

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As Kissinger admits, the primary cause of the problem is neither the ineptitude of the previous administration nor the fecklessness of the American people; it is the disappearance of the Soviet threat. More than any one factor, this change explains why Americans and Europeans (and Asians) now view each other differently. Although Kissinger properly highlights this fact in his analysis, he underestimates its impact and fails to recognize how hard it would be for even the most clever statesmen to overcome it.

The problem is simple. The European allies no longer need the United States to protect them from a dangerous external threat. They can provide for their own security, even in the unlikely event that Russia gets its house in order and threatens aggression in eastern Europe. Germany alone could probably deal with a resurgent Russia. But if Germany needed allies, it could get help from Britain, France and Italy, all wealthy and populous countries.

Now that Europe no longer requires American protection, European leaders are going to be much less reticent about challenging U.S. policies that they do not like, regardless of who is running American foreign policy. Even Kissinger would have serious trouble selling national missile defense to the Europeans. The fact is that the two sides have numerous minor to medium-size conflicting interests, but no longer have a major common interest—that of containing the Soviet Union. It is hardly surprising, then, that the Europeans are more willing to part company with Washington on issues like landmines, the International Criminal Court, missile defense or the death penalty.

There is a special dimension to this problem that Kissinger briefly mentions. Germany, like Japan, has not been a "normal state" since the final days of World War II. For the past half century, it has not had an independent military capability, but instead has subordinated its army to NATO control. More generally, it has depended largely on the United States for its security. In effect, it is a powerful but only semi-sovereign state, trapped in a straitjacket that prevents it from throwing its weight around in Europe.

Germany's impotence is unnatural and unlikely to last much longer. Germany has a large population and the most powerful economy in Europe, and the burdens of its past are diminishing as the generations born after 1945 rise to power. U.S.-German relations, which have long been at the core of NATO, will grow more distant and more contentious once Germany becomes a truly independent state. No American policymaker, even one with velvet gloves on both hands, will find it easy to maintain consistently friendly relations with a normal Germany.

Turning to the other side of the Atlantic, the main problem that Kissinger's proposals face is that there is no compelling reason for the United States to remain militarily engaged in Europe. Historically, America has acted as an off-shore balancer in Europe (and Asia), which means that it has committed military forces to that region when there was a potential hegemon that the local powers could not contain by themselves. This logic explains why the United States: (1) entered World War I in April 1917 against Wilhelmine Germany; (2) began massively rearming in the summer of 1940 in anticipation of going to war against Nazi Germany; and (3) remained in Europe after 1945 to contain the Soviet Union. For sound strategic reasons, the United States will not tolerate a European hegemon. But no state is threatening to overrun Europe today or will so threaten in the near future.

One might challenge this perspective by arguing that the United States has effectively become a European power over the course of the past century and, therefore, it has no choice but to keep its

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forces on the other side of the Atlantic and maintain peace among its purported neighbors.[3] But this line of argument is not persuasive. As a cursory look at a map reveals, the United States is neither a European nor an Asian power. It is safely located in the Western Hemisphere, far away from Europe and Asia, and it has a long history of avoiding military commitments in those regions when it was not needed to check an aspiring hegemon. And we should not forget that this policy served the United States well, keeping us out of many unnecessary wars and allowing us to fight the two world wars on favorable terms. There is no potential peer competitor today, however, and no alternative justification for placing American troops in harm's way in Europe—or, for that matter, in any other place. This benign strategic environment explains in large part why most Americans do not want their soldiers dying in combat and why they show little interest in foreign policy issues.

Does Kissinger provide a compelling strategic rationale for continued U.S. military involvement in Europe? No, and some of his arguments actually reinforce the case for withdrawal. In his words: "In Europe, two world wars and the insufficient scale of the European nation-state in the face of global challenges have made the 19th-century balance of power irrelevant. The nations of Europe no longer treat one another as strategic threats." But if security competition and great-power war have been eliminated from Europe, as Kissinger claims, then there is no good strategic reason to maintain NATO and keep 100,000 American troops in the region.

Kissinger's claims about the peacefulness of Europe notwithstanding, he suggests that NATO should still be preserved as a hedge against the possibility of "a new Russian imperialism." But, as noted above, the states of western Europe have the military potential to deal with any conceivable threat from a resurgent Russia on their own. Why should the United States expend blood and treasure to defend states that are eminently capable of defending themselves? There may be a realist case for perpetuating the Cold War order in Europe, but Kissinger has not made it.

Kissinger is on firmer ground to argue for maintaining American troops in Asia, but even here his case is unconvincing. He clearly recognizes that great-power war is possible in Asia, and that the logic of off-shore balancing provides an appropriate rationale for keeping the United States militarily engaged in that volatile region. "It is in the American national interest", he writes, "to resist the effort of any power to dominate Asia—and, in the extreme, the United States should be prepared to do so without allies." The problem, however, is that there is no potential hegemon in Asia today. In Kissinger's own words: "No Asian nation—not even China—is in a position to threaten all its neighbors simultaneously, as the Soviet Union was able to do until the very end of the Cold War." Consequently, his case for an American military presence in Asia is no more persuasive than his justification for preserving the U.S. role in Europe.

The bottom line is that Kissinger's prescription—that the central focus of U.S. foreign policy should be the preservation of its Cold War alliances—is not feasible. The principal obstacle is not misguided domestic political forces. It matters little who occupies the White House or which party controls Congress. After all, George Bush, whom Kissinger contrasts favorably with Bill Clinton, is having even more trouble dealing with America's allies than did his predecessor. Despite his

[3]Richard Holbrooke, "America, A European Power", *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1995).

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unparalleled credentials and still-impressive powers of analysis, Kissinger's proposals do not persuade. Why? Because one cannot maintain the Cold War order in the absence of the Cold War itself.

Kissinger's own scholarship leads to the same conclusion. He has emphasized over many years that effective statesmanship requires working with, not against, the driving forces of international politics. This is why he has preferred Bismarck to Metternich.[4] According to Kissinger, Metternich's efforts to create a stable order in Europe after Napoleon's final defeat in 1815 were doomed by his failure to accommodate nationalism, the awesome force unleashed by the French Revolution. In effect, Metternich was locked in time. He sought to rebuild the 18th-century political order in Europe, but its underlying political structure had disappeared.

Bismarck, on the other hand, understood that a successful foreign policy must accommodate change, neither resisting it nor surrendering to it. He recognized the potency of nationalism and he used it both to build a powerful Germany and to foster a favorable political order in Europe. In his new book, Kissinger sounds more like the reactionary Metternich than the forward-looking Bismarck. It is as though Kissinger is marching in place as the ground beneath him hurtles forward. His policy prescriptions thus violate a major tenet of his own impressive scholarship: any effort to base U.S. foreign policy in the 21st century on structures created to wage the Cold War is bound to fail. □

[4]Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957); and "The White Revolutionary: Reflections on Bismarck", *Daedalus* (Summer 1968).

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Scathing on Thin Ice

George Jonas

Christopher Hitchens, *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (New York: Verso, 2001), 160 pp., $22.

ON MAY 29, 2001, French officials appeared at the Ritz Hotel in Paris with a summons for former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. It was issued by an examining magistrate at the request of William Bourdon, a lawyer representing the families of several French nationals who allegedly disappeared in General Augusto Pinochet's Chile. Maître Bourdon wanted Dr. Kissinger to appear as a "witness" in the case.

Dr. Kissinger had no obligation, of course, to answer questions in the court of a crusading French magistrate. He flew on to Italy as scheduled, leaving it to the American embassy in France to explain to Judge Roger Le Loire that if he had any

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queries about U.S. government policy in Latin America during the Pinochet years, he should ask them of the State Department.

The Left was nevertheless jubilant. "When the names of former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger popped up intertwined in the news last week, it was a magical moment for human rights activists worldwide", enthused Marc Cooper in the June 3 *Los Angeles Times*. A contributing editor of *The Nation* and a former translator for the late Chilean president, Salvador Allende, Cooper evidently felt that the most recent turn in the comedy that started with Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón's attempt to extradite General Pinochet from London, then continued this spring with the publication of Christopher Hitchens' *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, was making the Left's guerrilla theater a smash hit worldwide.

The spirit behind Europe's grandstanding magistrates (and Mr. Hitchens' book) is manifested particularly in the Netherlands, where war crimes trials are becoming something of an industry. Last year student "jurists" of a moot court in the renowned Hague Academy of International Law invited the press while they questioned an actor in the prisoner's dock, wearing a cocked hat and a gold-studded coat.

"Are you Napoleon Bonaparte, born August 15, 1769, in Ajaccio, Corsica?"

"*Oui!*"

"How do you plead?"

"*Non coupable!*"

On this particular day, the moot court failed to find enough evidence that Napoleon set fire to Moscow, and thus acquitted him of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The actor in the cocked hat looked relieved. However, as the *Times of India* pointed out, the mock trial "offered a flavour of what may be in store for tomorrow's leaders—and not only megalomaniac dictators."

Kissinger himself anticipated the use to which Pinochet-type precedents would be put by partisans of political causes, in courts both moot and real. "If generally applied", he wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* in December 2000, "[such doctrines] would legitimize *ad hoc* procedures and standards invented for the arrest of suspects, their extradition and eventual trials, and thus grant limitless license to ambitious national prosecutors or for the settling of political scores."

Kissinger was soon proved correct. In *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, published this spring by Verso, the imprint of New Left Books, Hitchens sets out to settle political scores with gusto. He begins by offering the view that Kissinger's "manners are. . . rather gross" and that "his single greatest achievement has been to get almost everybody to call him 'Doctor.'" Not a flattering portrait, but it does follow an internal logic if one is attempting, as Hitchens is, to build a case against one of the most significant statesmen of the 20th century as a war criminal.

Suggesting that Kissinger—a scholar and administrator who, as former National Security Advisor and Secretary of State to Presidents Nixon and Ford, had been the chief architect of détente with the Soviet Union, disengagement in Vietnam, and rapprochement with China—is a war criminal is not easy. (Considering Kissinger's policies of accommodation with various communist powers, it would be easier to suggest that he is a peace criminal.) The accusation gets no less nonsensical as Hitchens proceeds to elaborate on his charges, accusing Kissinger of criminally actionable sins in South and Southeast Asia, Cyprus, East Timor, Greece and, of course, Chile. In every locale Hitchens is scathing, but he is everywhere scathing on thin ice.

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HITCHENS WASTES no time in coming to the point. In the first chapter, he levels a key accusation against Kissinger: that to advance his own career, the future national security advisor played a pivotal role in 1968 Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon's efforts "to sabotage the Paris peace negotiations on Vietnam." The alleged method of sabotage was for Nixon to persuade South Vietnamese president Nguyen Van Thieu (or, as Hitchens puts it, "the South Vietnamese military rulers") to ditch the talks because he, Nixon, could get a better deal for Saigon than Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey. According to Hitchens, Kissinger acted as a mole for Nixon in this effort, which supposedly extended the war by four years, resulting in thousands of casualties on both sides.

Perhaps the most nonsensical thing about this accusation is that it is predicated on President Thieu having illusions about North Vietnam. Thieu hardly required instruction from American presidential candidates about Hanoi's faux peace negotiations. In any event, the negotiations were not scuttled by Thieu. The talks, deadlocked on procedural issues from November 1, started again during the Johnson Administration when Saigon accepted a Soviet compromise offer—on Nixon's urging and *before* his inauguration.

A better case could be made (and has been, in Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin's memoirs, among other places) for the proposition that the Democratic administration's peace initiative and bombing halt shortly before the 1968 elections was timed to get Hubert Humphrey elected. If any side was using Vietnam War tactics for domestic politics, it was the Democrats. Hitchens is aware of this argument, but counters that even "if the Johnson-Humphrey regime sought to time the talks for their own electoral purposes" they had not done so behind the scenes, but "in public view, and as the legally elected and constituted government of the United States." Presumably this makes timing bombing halts for electoral purposes all right.

Hitchens devotes special attention to Kissinger's allegedly sinister role in Chile. To properly understand this attention, however, requires some background.

The world was not a tranquil place between 1970 and 1973, and the times were not conducive to viewing with equanimity the rise of Dr. Salvador Allende Gossens, who (as Régis Debray tells us in *The Chilean Revolution: Conversations with Allende*) plainly stated that he aimed at establishing "total, scientific, Marxist socialism" in Chile. After Allende's death, left-wing legends of injured innocence painted him as a kind of social democratic reformer. He was nothing of the sort. As Kissinger puts it in *White House Years*: "One should not needlessly insult the integrity of a man who spent his life dedicated to revolution by claiming him to be something he always denied."

Hitchens implies that recently declassified documents throw new lights on events that have been reported and investigated many times. But Kissinger's view of Allende has never been a secret: it is plainly expressed in Kissinger's memoirs that he considered Allende and his policies inimical to U.S. interests as well as to the ideals of democracy. No doubt, Kissinger welcomed Allende's downfall (though, as he emphasizes, not his violent death). What Hitchens fails to provide is any evidence, new or old, that the U.S. administration or Kissinger had brought about either.

The evidence for covert U.S. involvement in Chile goes back to the fall of 1970, before Dr. Allende's inauguration. The majority (62.7 percent) of Chile's

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voters had cast their ballot against Allende, but since there were three candidates, Allende's 36.2 percent gave him a slim (about one percent) plurality of the votes. Constitutionally, in such a situation it was up to the Chilean Congress to choose the president.

The Nixon Administration wanted to prevent Allende from parleying his minuscule plurality into another foothold for Marxism in Latin America. First it tried to persuade the Chilean Congress to select another candidate. When this did not work, it attempted what Kissinger describes in *Years of Upheaval* as a "haphazard and amateurish exploration of a military coup", designed to force a run-off election between Allende and the top democratic candidate. This effort was eventually called off: "More precisely", as Kissinger notes, "the American part was called off, the Chilean component was bungled."

It is this bungled Chilean component to which Hitchens attempts to link Kissinger. As it happened, the Chilean Chief of Staff, General René Schneider, was opposed to military interference in politics. This being an obstacle to using the army to bring about a run-off election, some officers in the Chilean military, notably a group led by General Roberto Viaux, hatched a plot to kidnap General Schneider. The U.S. administration was aware of Viaux's plans and provided initial support, but when it became clear that the likelihood of a successful coup was very low, the U.S. coordinating committee—the 40 Committee—told the plotters to abandon their efforts. On October 15, 1970, Kissinger wrote to President Nixon: "This looks hopeless. I turned it off. Nothing would be worse than an abortive coup." Nonetheless, some of General Viaux's plotters, along with elements of another group and possibly aided by some rogue CIA assets in Chile, made two more unsuccessful attempts to kidnap General Schneider. Then, on October 22, Viaux's group made a third attempt, in the course of which General Schneider was murdered.

In his role as a moot court prosecutor, Hitchens charges that "Henry Kissinger bears direct responsibility for the Schneider murder." The problem for Hitchens' prosecution is that the evidence at his disposal has long since been examined, by the Senate Select Intelligence Committee in 1975. Senator Frank Church's committee was not favorably disposed, to put it mildly, to the Nixon Administration, but concluded nevertheless that there was "no evidence of a plan to kill Schneider or that United States officials specifically anticipated that Schneider would be shot during the abduction." Hitchens seeks to dispose of this finding by calling Kissinger's instructions to stop the plotters "a paper-thin cover story", admitting with regret that "this sorry cover story has even found a refuge in the written record." The fact is, of course, that this *is* the record: the only thing supported by evidence as well as by the finding of a Senate committee. The record shows further that Kissinger wrote to President Nixon on October 18, 1970, that Allende's inauguration "now appeared certain." He would hardly have written this if a coup had still been an option, or if he had anticipated Viaux's October 22 kidnapping attempt.

Hitchens further charges that Dr. Kissinger cannot claim to have been "indifferent to, or unaware of, the true situation" of assassination, torture and other human rights abuses in the Southern Hemisphere. As evidence, he offers excerpts from a memorandum of a 1976 conversation (declassified in 1999) between Kissinger and General Augusto Pinochet. But, when read in its entirety, the document shows the opposite of what Hitchens suggests. Far from "advis-

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ing a murderer and despot to disregard his upcoming remarks as a sop to Congress", which is the spin Hitchens puts on the conversation, Kissinger was advising Chile's president to take his remarks to heart. He was conveying a warning—diplomatically, but forcefully and unmistakably—that if Pinochet wished to preserve the support he needed from the United States, his government had to make genuine efforts to conform to Western democratic standards concerning the rule of law and civil rights.

When Pinochet responded that "we are slowly making progress" on the human rights front, and "we have freed more" of the last 400 detainees, Kissinger urged him to "have a bigger program of releases." There was even to be a *quid pro quo*: the Secretary knew some of the items that General Pinochet wanted from the United States—the embassy at Santiago had cabled him a list of matters "to provide encouragement and/or incentives to the GOC [Government of Chile] to respond to our concerns." These concerns, of course, were human rights: not just as a gesture, but as a reality. What arouses Hitchens' indignation is that in the memorandum Kissinger makes it equally clear to Pinochet that the U.S. administration is "not out to weaken your position" and that "we welcomed the overthrow of the Communist-inclined government here."

But why should any U.S. secretary of state not have held that view? Anyone with the slightest concern for human rights would have welcomed the weakening of communism in the Western Hemisphere. Communism was hardly a spent force in the 1970s. The system of "applied scientific Marxism" claimed (by low estimates) 70 million victims in the 20th century, and, still looking to extend itself in various parts of the globe, it was evidently searching for more. Although the United States did not engineer Allende's downfall in September 1973, it had every reason to welcome it. Even for this, it seems, the remaining denizens of the Left cannot find it in their hearts to forgive.

HITCHENS also holds Kissinger responsible for "the bloody invasion of Cyprus." Briefly, his case for the prosecution is that since Kissinger disliked the nonaligned Cypriot president, Archbishop Makarios, he took no steps to prevent Greece's right-wing military *junta* ("a U.S. client", in Hitchens' words) from engineering a coup against Makarios in July 1974. Then, when Turkey responded to the coup by invading the island, Kissinger again allowed events to unfold without blocking the Turkish invasion. This resulted in the death, displacement and disappearance of thousands of civilians, all because Kissinger "made himself an accomplice in a plan of political assassination" of the archbishop. (Makarios physically survived the coup.)

As proof of Kissinger's intentions, Hitchens quotes his description of Makarios as "the proximate cause of most of Cyprus's tensions" from *Years of Renewal*, the concluding volume of Kissinger's memoirs. Hitchens offers this fragment as the motive for Kissinger's endorsement of a *coup d'etat*: if Kissinger felt that President Makarios was "the 'proximate cause' of the tensions", Hitchens writes, "then his removal from the scene is self-evidently the cure for them." Very cute—except Hitchens conveniently omits Kissinger's full sentence: ". . . Makarios, the proximate cause of most of Cyprus's tensions, *was also the best hope for a long-term peaceful solution*" (author's italics). In Hollywood movies this is usually where the lawyer puts down his notes and says: "The defense rests."

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Whether the site is Indochina, Bangladesh, Chile or East Timor, Hitchens' method of prosecution is the same: he concedes that "some of these allegations can only be constructed *prima facie*, since Kissinger—in what may also amount to a deliberate and premeditated obstruction of justice—has caused large tranches of evidence to be withheld or possibly destroyed." In other words, Hitchens turns his inability to find sufficient evidence to prove his charges against Kissinger into another charge: obstructing justice. The late A. Ya. Vyshinsky, who used to run Stalin's show trials, would applaud.

Taking another leaf out of a show trial prosecutor's book, Hitchens argues that measures Kissinger contemplated but did not employ—such as bombing dikes in Vietnam to flood the countryside—show a "regnant mentality" disposed to war crimes. Quite apart from the fact that targeting dikes or other infrastructure would have been legitimate in a war (e.g., NATO did so two years ago in Yugoslavia), the point is that if anything shows one's "regnant mentality", it is what one ultimately *does*—which in Kissinger's case was his decision *not* to use such measures. As John O'Sullivan put it in the *National Review*, Hitchens "can content himself with having invented a new international felony—a 'war-thought-crime.'"

Hitchens spends most of chapter 10, called "Afterword: the Profit Margin", intimating that Kissinger has benefited financially from his foreign policy counsel. As he can offer no evidence for any conflict of interest, Hitchens comes up with the clever term "harmony of interest" to bolster his innuendo. The aspersion comes off as another attempt to hit below the belt, not only by the Marquis of Queensbury rules, but even by the lowly standards of gutter journalism.

IN HIS PREFACE Hitchens contends that "[t]he Pinochet verdict in London, the splendid activism of the Spanish magistracy and the verdicts of the International Tribunal at The Hague have destroyed the shield that immunized crimes committed under the justification of *raison d'etat*." In fact, Hitchens is ready to extend the principle a good deal further. He proposes to prosecute not only crimes but policy decisions made for reasons of state, provided they are policy decisions that run counter to his own predilections.

Hitchens' charges against Kissinger range from the totally spurious to ones that could be brought against most political figures whose countries were engaged in hostilities, anti-terrorist campaigns, or faced insurrections during their terms of office. Never mind tough guys like Ariel Sharon, Yasser Arafat, Vladimir Putin, Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher: Hitchens' net—if consistently applied—would catch even ex-'60s peaceniks such as Gerhard Schröder, Bill Clinton or Tony Blair. (NATO's air raids over Serbia claimed civilian casualties, as did Clinton's cruise missiles lobbed at Sudan, among other places, in 1998.)

Dressing up politics in black robes does not elevate politics, of course; it just lowers justice. Incongruous as it is to discuss Dr. Kissinger in the same breath with General Pinochet, the Pinochet extradition case does provide one object lesson. The lengthy wrangling in the British courts illustrated that whenever judges are inclined, for political or ideological reasons, to arrive at a certain result, they are likely to find the legal props to support it. Pinochet's extradition made no sense in law as presented in the Spanish magistrate's initial request, which said in essence that the international treaty on genocide should be extended to cover the killings of political opponents, and also authorize trials in the national courts of other countries.

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The Law Lords rejected this—not surprisingly, because the treaty contains no such provisions—but then agreed to have Judge Garzón's request amended under the UN Torture Convention to which Britain became a signatory in 1988, resting the entire case on a single incident, the beating of a suspect in a provincial Chilean police station.

What this indicates is that courts are not impervious to the general political climate in which they find themselves. Although the idea of any country trying to prosecute a former U.S. secretary of state on the basis of assertions such as Hitchens' still seems only the erotic dream of neutered liberals and ex-flower children who have long fantasized about setting up a Holy Inquisition of the Left, the FBI has seen fit to issue quiet warnings to former American officials about traveling in some European countries—not without reason, as Judge Le Loire's attempt to summon Kissinger in Paris has indicated. Within weeks, a court decided that it had jurisdiction to try Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Belgium for war crimes. The danger that international systems of justice may be hijacked for political ends is quite real.

For now, the faithful are content to utilize the "splendid activism" of Spanish, French or Belgian magistrates, but as their ultimate instrument they look forward to the still-to-be established International Criminal Court. This body came a step closer to being on December 31, 2000, when President Bill Clinton (as he then was) announced that the United States would become a signatory to the Rome Treaty. Though the treaty is unlikely to be ratified by the Senate—and in any case the ICC would have no jurisdiction over Kissinger because it cannot try cases retroactively—if such a court came into being today, it might well put Colin Powell in the dock for some policy decision tomorrow.

Any international court is almost guaranteed to prosecute identical conduct selectively. If such a court wished to protect the peace, it would often have to make a mockery of justice; if it insisted on justice, it would often be obliged to wreck the peace. (The Dayton accords, after all, could not have been signed if Slobodan Milosevic had been charged with war crimes in 1995.) Ultimately, the greatest risk international courts raise is that of moral deception: political fashion hiding behind a mask of justice. Since such warnings tend to be dismissed as alarmist or exaggerated when made in the abstract, perhaps one should be grateful to Hitchens for helping to prove the point. As the 21st century begins, we are seeing those who were wrong during the Cold War proposing to pass judgment on those who were right. Since they don't seem to do it very well in books, they are trying to do it in courts of law. □

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Ukraine, Unexpected

Steven Erlanger

Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 366 pp., $29.95.

OF ALL the weak, corrupt, semi-independent semi-states that emerged, willingly or not, from the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine is both the most important and the most disappointing. It is also the most troubling, with the reckless waste and selfishness of the last decade bringing Ukrainians to compare their venal leaders to those of the Congo, and to charge them with undermining the very independence they were elected to preserve and enhance.

Belarus, with little tradition or history of independence from Moscow, is the most ludicrous of the successor states, unless one happens to be a Belarusian; the Baltic nations, moving with all the speed they could muster, have been the most successful. But from Georgia through the Caucasus and the five "stans", there is little to admire from those politicians who promised a free democratic future, with open markets and transparent justice, allied to the values of the West. Crippled and failing states litter the post-Soviet landscape. The preservation of independence itself, in the face of Russia's intermittent reach for renewed empire, has been their single great triumph. But they have had historically unusual help, for Russia itself has been hopelessly confused about what kind of state it wants to be, and within what borders. Luckily, Moscow's flickering ambitions have been restrained by poverty and weakness. But for how long?

Russia has been preoccupied with its two disgraceful wars in Chechnya, with the West tolerating from Moscow behavior for which it bombed Belgrade. But the mess in Chechnya has been oddly salutary, too; it has sharply deflated Russian military arrogance and may have saved Ukraine from an altogether different kind of Russian pressure.

For most American policymakers, Ukraine, now nuclear-free, matters only because of its proximity to Russia, and because of what its independence means for Russia's future and for European stability. In 1994 Zbigniew Brzezinski famously (and Eurocentrically) posited: "It cannot be stressed strongly enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire."[1]

To keep Ukraine alive (and Russia counterbalanced), Washington has provided more than $2 billion in aid since 1990, far more than has been given to any other former Soviet republic. Brzezinski's admonition did not, however, seem to bring Ukraine the kind of thoughtful Western media attention it deserved. Still, seven years later, some of the most dire predictions about Ukraine's collapse (and Russian appetites) have come to nothing, even as new fears arise over Vladimir Putin's efforts to reassert Russian authority in the so-called near abroad.

Andrew Wilson's fine book, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, helps explain why. A lecturer in Ukrainian studies at the School of Slavonic and East

[1]Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership", *Foreign Affairs* (March/April, 1994), p.80.

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European Studies, University College London, he has worked hard to explore and dispel many of the contradictory myths about Ukraine held most fervently by both Ukrainian and Russian nationalists.

This is not an easy read, but it is a scrupulous one, critical of received wisdom and fair to the facts as they may be known. In particular, Wilson tries to describe historical alternatives to Ukraine's development, making clear that its sovereignty now was hardly foreordained, and that its position between the Orthodox and Catholic worlds could have led to a Ukraine more aligned with Poland than Moscow.

Wilson properly stresses the divided cultural, religious and linguistic nature of Ukraine, between the nationalist, Catholic west and the more Moscow-oriented east, where Russian is more widely spoken and Soviet ideas of a unitary state dating back to the founding of Rus have taken strong hold. Such divisions help to explain Ukraine's unavoidable sensitivity to Moscow's needs, whims and demands, and its reluctance to trust too thoroughly in the blandishments of Washington, NATO and the European Union. Ukraine's divisions are also a major reason for Kiev's political paralysis and the continuing reign of a corrupt, if shifting, corporate and bureaucratic center committed only to its own aggrandizement. As Wilson writes: "This permanent government of the corporate center is paradoxically the result both of the weakness of the right and the strength of the left", with the Left here being the Moscow-oriented Communists and the Right being the nationalists and Rukh, the now-divided dissident movement that pressed for an independent Ukraine. "The right cannot govern alone", Wilson says. "The left, however, might"—but cannot be trusted to do so. The problem with "the center", of course, is that it believes in nothing except itself.

The result has been "stagnation, corruption, and the growing abuse of the power of the state", matched by popular disgust and alienation. But even such severe divisions can be managed, Wilson argues convincingly, without dooming the independence or unity of Ukraine. Unfortunately, he suggests, the best guarantee of Ukraine's independence may be that "elite interests are already consolidated around the new state." What might be left of the state after they have sated themselves is another question.

PUTIN'S mysterious ascension to the Russian throne has at least brought some clarity to questions of Russian ambitions and identity. Putin is struggling to reassert Russian power in key buffer states of the "near abroad", like Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, using new piles of untransparent Russian capital to gain control over key industries and sectors, from energy supplies and infrastructure to media outlets and steel. Ukraine and Russia are natural economic partners, it is true, but Moscow is being bolder now in trying to exploit Ukraine's energy dependence and economic weakness to get control over key assets, like the energy pipeline system, in exchange for writing off old debts.

Putin's efforts have been much aided by the weakness of the current leader of Ukraine, President Leonid Kuchma. A former director of a big, Moscow-run, military-industrial complex called Yuzhmash, Kuchma is allegedly corrupt and worse. He has been accused, by his own words on secretly made tape recordings, of orchestrating a grenade attack on one political opponent and the incarceration of others, and encouraging, like some Ukrainian Henry II, the disappearance of a troublesome journalist. The West could shut its eyes to many of Kuchma's shenanigans, but the murder of Heorhiy (Georgi) Gongadze, whose headless corpse was discovered last November at a crossroads,

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one hand emerging from the earth like a fetish, has been harder to dismiss.

Gongadze is not the first or the last crusading Ukrainian journalist to be murdered. But one of Kuchma's bodyguards, Mykola Melnychenko, was so disgusted by his master that he put a tape recorder under Kuchma's office sofa and then released some of the tapes before fleeing Ukraine and finally being granted political asylum in the United States (along with Gongadze's widow). Kuchma, who now admits that the voice on the tapes is his own, denies any wrongdoing, insisting that the tapes have been manipulated electronically to damage him. While some of his aides consider the whole thing a Moscow plot to weaken Ukraine, Kuchma is said to consider Melnychenko's choice of asylum a pointer toward the CIA, which he believes wanted to replace him with the more Western-oriented former prime minister, Viktor Yushchenko.

In response, Kuchma found help where it was offered: from Putin, who sent a political heavyweight, former Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, to Kiev as ambassador—some say as imperial governor. Chernomyrdin's real source of power, of course, is his position as the former head of Gazprom, itself the privatized version of the Soviet ministry for natural gas, to which Ukraine owes billions.

One day after Kuchma met Putin in February, as if sanctioned by Moscow, the police arrested a former deputy prime minister and vocal Kuchma critic, Yuliya Tymoshenko, on corruption charges. She was released after a degrading six-week stint in jail and began to organize an anti-Kuchma campaign. In early August, Putin again appeared to try to help Kuchma, as both civilian and military prosecutors in Russia announced they had opened criminal cases against her on bribery and customs charges.

Not long after Tymoshenko's arrest, in April, Kuchma withdrew support for Prime Minister Yushchenko, a former central banker who is seen as most responsible for Ukraine's fine economic growth rate of some nine percent this year. Though Yushchenko had served as an effective prime minister, Kuchma, ever suspicious of rivals, mourned his fall with crocodile tears as he appointed the current prime minister, Anatolii Kinakh. Kinakh, the former head of the Union of Entrepreneurs (also known as the "red managers club"), is expected to do nothing to endanger the president or the oligarchs, who helped support Kuchma with their control over key media outlets.

Wilson's book was completed before the Gongadze affair, the intimidation campaign against Tymoshenko, and the dismissal of Yushchenko, but it provides important context for these recent events. It describes in detail the development of Ukraine's venal oligarchy, its cynical relationship with both Leonid Kravchuk (its first president and a regional party hack-ideologist) and Kuchma, and their collective manipulation of both the voters and the West.

His opposition hopelessly split, as ever, Kuchma now seems to have ridden out protests over Gongadze—the largest was the first, back in December, with no more than 10,000 people in a country of 50 million—and is maneuvering with more ease before parliamentary elections next spring. Kuchma is so much at ease, senior diplomats in Kiev now say—or so concerned about leaning too far toward Moscow—that he is now tacking back to the West, passing some reform legislation, including a copyright law, and reducing the power of the state prosecutor. At the same time, he has instituted another layer of presidential control over the bureaucracy, introducing presidentially-appointed state secretaries to oversee ministries.

Kuchma's maneuverings are another indication of the protection provided by Ukraine's weakness and its geographical

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position between Moscow and NATO. Ukraine's self-evident importance—the "keystone in the arch" of European security, as Sherman W. Garnett has called it—has also given its post-independence leaders considerable protection from their manifold sins.[2] As in so many other parts of the world, the United States, as a status-quo power, has valued stability over any serious commitment to the values it so volubly promotes.

GIVEN THE WASTE of the last dozen years, it is hard to remember the excitement and pride that the Soviet collapse brought to Ukraine, even as Kravchuk tried to balance a surging nationalism with his long fealty to Moscow. For all Ukraine's pride and resentment of Russian arrogance toward its "little brothers" in Ukraine and Belarus, however, independence was thrust upon both Kiev and Minsk, and no one was ready. Ukraine found itself with an airline, consisting of the Aeroflot planes that happened to be on its territory, and with an economy it neither comprehended nor controlled. In Kiev in those days, economists suggested that as much as 80 percent of the enterprises on Ukrainian soil were controlled directly from Moscow, part of the clumsy system of centralized planning that made widgets in one place and scroggets in another thousands of miles away, and then put them together in a third city where the workers had no idea how the object in question was designed or made, let alone marketed and sold.

Ukraine also found itself, like Moldova and Tajikistan, to be a strange Communist confection. It had to cope with a formerly Polish west and a formerly Russian Crimea, tacked on to Ukraine in a fit of celebratory foolishness by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954. Khrushchev, himself a Ukrainian, was marking the 300th anniversary of the Treaty of Pereiaslav, which, Moscow had decreed, was the beginning of an eternal Russian-Ukrainian brotherhood; Ukrainian nationalists, especially in the diaspora, had always regarded it as less a treaty than a contract directed against an external enemy, quickly broken, as usual, by the czar.

Its current territorial configuration makes the persistence of Ukrainian sovereignty itself, no matter how weakened it may become, something of a triumph. Interestingly enough, it has been helped in that regard to a large degree by the political nature of Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin may have ended his presidency a bloated, drunken buffoon, but he colluded happily with Kravchuk to dismantle the Soviet Union and revive Ukraine as an independent country. Yeltsin bloviated about the rights of Russians abroad for political advantage, but he was not an imperialist, and Ukrainians (as well as the Balts) have much to thank him for—which is why, despite its general excellence and efforts to be fair to Russian arguments, Wilson's book has some bizarre mistakes and omissions. Certainly, the Stalin-induced famine in Ukraine should have received fuller treatment, as should the earlier careers of both Kravchuk and Kuchma as servants of the old regime.

There is no stranger mistake, however, than in Wilson's description of the key meeting in the Belarusian forest that spelled the end of the Soviet Union. Yeltsin met there in December 1991 with Kravchuk and Belarus's first leader, Stanislav Shushkevich. After a long, drunken evening, they got down to business the next day. Wilson quotes Kravchuk as saying about Yeltsin: "Boris Mikhailovich, as it seemed to me, understood by independence something different." Yeltsin's

[2]Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997).

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patronymic is Nikolayevich, not Mikhailovich, as even Wilson's editors should have known. It is one thing to misspell the name of Vaclav Klaus, which Wilson does, but Yeltsin? The Russian White House was shelled in 1993, not "bombed." And Wilson, for all his honorable efforts to provide cultural context, manages to call Isaac Babel's famous character, Benya Krik, the King of Odessa, "Beria Krik", an odd Stalinist slip of the keyboard.

But Wilson nevertheless does Ukraine a great service with his book, which is both engaged and critical. He describes with admirable subtlety Ukraine's key dilemmas, caught between a blustering, poor, semi-Asiatic Russia and a central Europe moving rapidly toward the West, leaving its eastern neighbors behind. Indeed, a Hungarian lawyer, Zsuzsanna Langi, likes to say that "it's easier being the easternmost province of a western empire than the westernmost province of an eastern empire." Lucky Hungary. Unlucky the unexpected Ukraine. □

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1945 and All That

John Lukacs

P.M.H. Bell, *The World Since 1945: An International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 593 pp., $80 (cloth), $29.95 (paper).

IN THE HISTORY of the world (and, of course, of the United States) 1945 was more of a turning point than 1918 had been. The First World War brought about the end of the European state system that had governed much of the world since the 16th century, even including the geopolitical situation of the Americas; but its worldwide consequences were not comparable to the results of the Second World War. After 1918 the colonial empires of Britain and France and of other European countries continued to exist. In 1917 the entry of the United States in, and the withdrawal of Russia from, the European War were decisive events—the first more than the second, since the Russian withdrawal from the war did not affect its course in the end, while the American entry did—but after 1918 America and Russia, albeit for very different reasons, withdrew from Europe. Again for very different reasons, both became involved in the Second World War in 1941, at the end of which they were the supreme victors. Thus 1945 marked many things: the end of the European Age; the partition of Europe and of Germany; the impending end of the colonial empires and the emergence of many dozens of new states in Asia and Africa; the primacy of the United States across the world, eventually involving the retreat of Russia and the dissolution of the Soviet Union—all of these events bearing long-range consequences. The world in 2001 is at first sight very different from the world in 1945, but one may, without much eye strain, espy its origins already at that time.

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All of this has had an effect on the writing of history. During the last half-century it was not only the political configuration of the world that changed; so has the very texture of history, including changes in the structure of societies. The result is that historians must deal not only with what has been happening, but also with how. There exists an amazingly persistent interest in history (one of the very few encouraging phenomena at a time of overall intellectual decay). Yet seldom do historians consider these mutations adequately. Contemporary history flourishes as well as ever (consider only the plethora of histories of the Vietnam war). Yet even in massive volumes such as Henry Kissinger's *Diplomacy* something is missing. Its very title is inaccurate, since international relations have come to amount to something wider and deeper than the relations of states, which is what "diplomacy" has meant since the 15th century. The relationships of nations have become important, often even more important than the relations of states; in any event, the two sorts of relationships have become inseparable. The dominant popular force in the world is still nationalism, which has proved to be much more important and enduring than ideology. (In many contemporary historical interpretations of the Cold War the recognition of this is still wanting.) This phenomenon is worldwide.

Consequently, not only the global geographic scope but the very historical analysis of the world since 1945 presents an enormous task to a historian. Philip Bell's book is, in this respect, near encyclopedic and admirable. *The World Since 1945* sounds like a grandiloquent title; but its content is fitting. This book ought to be a principal text in courses on contemporary history, and certainly for students of international relations (which, as suggested above, is an inaccurate term, dealing with the relations of states and governments and not of nations; but, then, the United Nations, too, is a booming misnomer, being an organization of governments and states, not of nations).

The structure of *The World Since 1945* is magisterial. It reflects Bell's governing comprehension and treatment of two overwhelming themes: the history of the Cold War and the end of colonization—the first having reached its end more than ten years ago, the second whose end is not quite yet. Bell makes it clear that the origins of the Cold War were not due to the Russian Revolution, that is, to "International Communism", but to the Second World War and its consequences (the title of his prologue). Thereafter Part I describes the Cold War from 1945–62 and "Decolonization and Wars of Succession" during the same period. Part II treats world history from 1963 to the end of the Cold War, concluding with a brief and terse Part III: "The Conduct and Motivation of International Affairs", and "The World since the Cold War: New Order and Old Chaos."

Bell is historian enough to distinguish turning points from milestones. He recognizes, for example, how the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, even though suppressed by Russian armed force, was a long-range turning point in the Cold War because it marked the final decline of international communism, especially among Western intellectuals; but, far more importantly, because it led (after a temporarily acute bitterness) to an improvement of American-Russian relations, since Khrushchev and his Politburo associates had recognized that the United States was not inclined to challenge the then division of Europe. In Part II, Bell distinguishes between "détente", 1963–75, and the sudden decline of détente and "renewed Cold War", from 1976 to 1985.

Bell has not been an expert either of American-Russian relations or of the histories of Asia, Africa and South

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America—or, indeed, of the writing of history after 1945. Yet *The World Since 1945* is proof of what a well-trained (and, in many ways, old-fashioned) historian is capable of doing when his interest and perspective are directed to problems, periods, places and peoples well beyond his earlier interests. Retired from teaching at Liverpool, he has written respectable and valuable works on many other topics, mostly about the Second World War and Anglo-French relations, including *A Certain Eventuality: Britain and the Fall of France* (1974) and two volumes of *France and Britain: 1900–1994* (1996).

The quality of Bell's historianship appears, too, from the customary probity of his language. His style is both restrained and illuminating, an unusually good combination. Here are a few illustrations. About 1945: "Myths cling to the Yalta Conference like barnacles to a wreck." About the 1958 Mideast crisis: "as long as the Americans did not attempt to reverse the coup in Iraq, the Soviets were prepared to let Lebanon and Jordan alone." About the Vietnam War: "The Americans possessed total supremacy in the air, and if necessary could use massive fire-power on land. In the 1960s, American strategic thinking was dominated by a pseudo-scientific approach, strongly advocated by the Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, in which everything could be calculated in terms of fire-power, bomb-loads and casualty rates . . . too little attention was paid to the imponderable and incalculable issue of morale." About the Helsinki Accords of 1975: " . . . both of the superpowers were surprised by the outcome. The Soviets achieved their main objective, only to find out that other elements had been introduced into the deal. The Americans expected little, and slowly discovered that they had gained much." About the American-Russian conflict in the Third World: "It appeared that the Cold War was not after all going to be won or lost in Africa; it merely lost its way there, which was something very different." One of the strengths of this book, too, is Bell's consistent illumination—and reminder—of the reciprocal *quid pro quo* balancing of American-Russian moves throughout the Cold War.

There is, however, one caveat to note—perhaps the only marginal shortcoming of this admirable work. Bell understands the importance of public opinion and of popular sentiments—in sum, the domestic politics and pressures affecting conflicts and states. Yet—perhaps—he does not emphasize them strongly enough, except in his summary "Reflections" at the end of each part, and in his methodological and analytic conclusions at the end of the volume. National interest was and remains *the* decisive factor in the relations of states. But whereas in the past national interest was—well, almost—identical with the perceptions of governments, this vague but strong impulse has become more difficult to pinpoint when popular sentiments (again an element that is not necessarily identical with what is called, inaccurately, "public opinion") in the history of nations, nationalities and nationalisms have risen in importance, at the same time that the power and the freedom of action of governments (including traditional diplomacy) have declined. Like everything in history, this development is yet inchoate and not universally true; but it surely marks the history of the world since 1945. In this respect, too, *The World Since 1945* is exceptionally useful: it amounts to a well-designed bridge leading from a—relatively—older order of things toward a very new world. □

John Lukacs is the author of *Five Days in London* (1999) and of the forthcoming *At the End of an Age* (2002), both published by Yale University Press.

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Letters

Natural Rights and Human History:

Francis Fukuyama has written his usual interesting piece ("Natural Rights and Human History", Summer 2001), and he is right that we must clean up our moral assumptions before we translate them into policy. I agree with almost every word of his general argument. Indeed, many of his conclusions parallel some of my own: that the propensity to control violence is as strong as the propensity to violence itself, for example. This must seem odd since he has chosen to make me a whipping boy for his "discovery" that the naturalistic fallacy isn't fallacious. I find this odd, since for forty years I have been arguing that the philosophical world was wrong about Hume, who did nothing more than observe the facility with which men leap from is to ought.[1] I have never been one of those scientists "quick to invoke the naturalistic fallacy as a shield to protect their work from unpalatable political implications": unequivocally and absolutely the opposite, often to my cost.[2]

I don't say with Ehrlich that human nature gives us no guidance. In my article to which Fukuyama refers ("Human Nature and Human Rights", Winter 2000/2001) I say it either gives direct guidance, or tells us what we might wish to avoid, or is neutral. I was simply concerned to point out that those who are trumpeting the "human" in human rights are mostly trampling on many human rights to promote the political rights they happen to favor. I am *agreeing* with Fukuyama; I certainly do not "dismiss natural rights." He does not happen to like some of the rights I derive, but that is another matter.

I would have thought that my analysis of the issue of the human rights of the collectivity versus those of the individual—an analysis very guilty of naturalism—would be music to a Hegelian! I think we could have a serious discussion here about naturalism, once Fukuyama figures out that we are on the same (naturalistic) side. The ground would then be cleared for some substantial disagreement over whether rights trump needs (a hierarchy of needs could perhaps solve that one), or over his notion that the economic benefits of a modern capitalist (liberal) economy satisfy "latent longings of our underlying natures." Maybe so, but how?

Consider that in an environment of evolutionary adaptation characterized by scarcity there was, for example, no need for endogenous curbs on our desire for sweet and salty things. Scarcity was its own curb. These "latent longings" however, once offered limitless satisfaction,

[1] In *The Search for Society* I even use Darwin's own "functional" disproof of the fact-value/is-ought distinction ("A pointer ought to point") as well as exactly the same Nietzsche quote that Fukuyama fastens onto. Chapter 5 of *Conjectures and Confrontations* (a sustained dialogue with James Q. Wilson) is perhaps my most coherent statement of the naturalist position.

[2] See, for example, my *Reproduction and Succession*—a book built on the premise that you can make good law from scientific facts, and which defends Mormon polygamy and the rights of surrogate mothers: both politically unpalatable, as are those "rights" I derive from nature in the article in question.

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lead to gorging, obesity, heart disease, alcoholism and addiction to opiates. The analogy holds with material goods, entertainment, violence, competition, information, power, sex and so forth. We are presented not with healthy satisfactions, but with an array of Niko Tinbergen's "supernormal stimuli" that overwhelms our scarcity-dependent controls. Socialism is not an alternative—I have always argued that it was simply another version of the industrial phase—but neither is what we've got. Fukuyama thinks that what is—in capitalism—is right because, in the historical short run, it beat out its opposition. This is a precarious principle, as is his assumption that people prefer the anonymity of modern cities to the traditional world of kin. People who flee to the cities of the capitalist world are not fleeing kinship but poverty. Of course, no one is going the other way, but not because they want to abandon kinship; rather, they don't want to give up material prosperity. Individualism and anonymity are prices they pay, not wholesome choices they voluntarily make. Most immigrants immediately recreate their world of kin when they arrive here, and even our own internal migrants attempt to establish, via elaborate customs of friendship, that same particularistic world. (Note the popularity of *Seinfeld*, *Friends* and similar "non-family" sitcoms.) Now *this* is a debate worth having.

ROBIN FOX
University Professor of
Social Theory
Rutgers University

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Francis Fukuyama's provocative article, "Natural Rights and Human History", attempts to clarify the sources of rights in his three-fold distinction: "divine rights, natural rights, and what one might call the contemporary positivistic view of rights as located in social law and custom." In short, the possible sources are "God, Nature and Man himself."

Fukuyama's argument for nature, "or, more precisely, human nature", leads him to the sticking point. He believes people must choose human nature-based thinking, because the only "positive rights" approach that he conceives of is, or leads necessarily to, cultural relativism, a conception in which "you have declared from the outset that there are no transcendent standards for determining right and wrong beyond whatever any particular culture declares to be a right."

Fukuyama is wrong to put things this way. It is possible to see the best answer to the question he poses—what are the justifiable or true sources of rights?—by combining positive rights with human nature-based rights thinking.

This is not some idea of compromise or vague splitting of a difference.

Why insist, as does Fukuyama, that everyone must choose for nature now? Why not a conception of rights that is simultaneously moral and historical? Why not posit that a human nature-based conception of rights is the correct or best version of rights, noting that the historical process—as Fukuyama himself is celebrated for arguing—is leading in an identifiable general direction, that of liberal democratic politics and morality? A gradual convergence of cultures, states, and nations on at least many of these rights (and thus also of wrongs) is, he himself argues, quite clear. And from Kant on, this view of rights as process as well as condition has been clear in our intellectual frameworks.

Is it so necessary or convincing to draw only a single line in the sand, rather than one full plus one dotted line? Truth is historical as well as logical. By insisting on the single true answer, by waving unnecessarily the red flag of cultural relativism, Fukuyama oversimplifies the question of the sources of rights and creates political divisions within what should be his own camp, which is otherwise much larger than he thinks.

RONALD TIERSKY
Eastman Professor of Politics
Amherst College

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Fukuyama writes: "Americans more than most peoples have tended to conflate rights and interests. By transforming every individual desire into a right unconstrained by community interests, one increases the inflexibility of political discourse. The debates in the United States over pornography and gun control would appear much less Manichaean if we spoke of the interests of pornographers rather than their fundamental First Amendment right to free speech, or the needs of assault weapon owners rather than their sacred Second Amendment right to bear arms." For someone who once wrote a book about the victory of classical liberal ideals this is a very strange declaration.

Natural rights, properly understood, are liberties, spheres of personal authority within which one does as one judges fit—even if it may be unwise, imprudent or cowardly—and others must gain entrance by permission. If I wish to publish or read pornography, for example, this is my right and none may prohibit me from doing so. I am no child, they aren't my parents.

It is just this kind of liberty that distinguishes the American political tradition from that of Asia, Europe and other places around the globe. Yes, in some measure it leaves America to rely on its rhetorical skills to exert influence and limits it from charging in everywhere with force. But one would assume someone who understands, even champions, classical liberal ideals would find this just the way things ought to be. Other nations bully those who stand in the way of their interests but in America we respect—or should or hold out the ideal that we would—everyone's basic rights, even when these oppose our interests.

TIBOR R. MACHAN
Silverado, CA

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In "Natural Rights and Human History" Francis Fukuyama writes: "Anyone seeking to prove today that the signers of the Declaration of Independence were right in believing that human rights are based on human nature faces an uphill battle." I don't know where Fukuyama has been since I first began publishing my defense of Abraham Lincoln, justifying his conviction that human rights were based upon human nature. In chapter 2 of my recent book, *A New Birth of Freedom: Abraham Lincoln and the Coming of the Civil War*, I systematically took up, and like Thomas Aquinas, replied to every objection to the thesis that the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence were the foundation of all political rights, and constitutional government. Fukuyama should review my book, and express his agreement or disagreement with the argument set forth therein. Perhaps we would end in reproducing the famed debate, on fundamentally the same topic, between my teacher, Leo Strauss, and his teacher, Alexander Kojève.

HARRY V. JAFFA
Claremont McKenna College

Fukuyama replies:

I apologize to Prof. Fox if I made him out to be a proponent of the naturalistic fallacy, contrary to what he has argued at different points over a long and distinguished academic career. What I was going on was the article on human rights that he published in *The National Interest*, and there, beyond a doubt, he makes fun of the idea that contemporary sociobiological understandings of human nature can give us useful guidance with regard to human rights. He does not in this piece rise to the defense of transcendent human rights and in fact scorns the idea that they can be a basis for foreign policy. So we in fact appear to disagree, at least with respect to what he wrote for this magazine. Readers who want to understand his position more fully should look to his other works, as referenced.

The issue he raises at the end of his letter is an important one. It is clear that life in modern, technological capitalist liberal societies is in many ways highly unnatural, begin-

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ning with the ready availability of calories that he mentions, to the unlimited types of social, consumer and other kinds of choices available to people today. My point was not to argue that our world was the best of all possible worlds with respect to our natures, but rather that it was better than others that have been put into place in the past century, and that attention to human nature would have given us guidance in that regard. Liberal societies do better than socially-engineered ones because they permit people to recreate things like kinship networks and social norms that come naturally to them. But there is no question that the absence of community and rules in modern societies can be highly alienating, because human beings were never adapted to live in that fashion.

With regard to Tiersky's comment that I shouldn't dichotomize natural and positive or historical rights, I don't think that I did so. I of course believe that there is such a thing as History in the Hegelian sense of human beings freely acting to shape their environment, ends and behavior. This can nonetheless coexist with a notion of nature. As Aristotle would have argued, the existence of nature and natural standards of right does not rigidly dictate one set of values, institutions or regime, nor does it rule out the possibility of historical progress. Aristotle noted that while man is a political animal by nature, the first *polis* had to be created in historical time by a lawgiver. Nature does, however, serve as a framework within which historical institutions emerge, one that allows us then to evaluate the possibilities History has created. And nature puts limits on our own self-modification. As both Plato and Aristotle understood, it is hard to know what nature is unless one listens to what people say about themselves. So positive rights are necessary to supplement our understanding of natural rights; but they are insufficient by themselves.

Mr. Machan's point is, as I understand it, that the United States was founded on what we would now label libertarian principles. This is simply not true: most of the American Founding Fathers believed that virtue was necessary for a successful democracy, to the extent that many believed that the states (though not the Federal government) had a right to establish religious belief. Most would almost certainly have disapproved of individuals consuming pornography in the privacy of their own homes. We have moved toward what Michael Sandel labels "procedural liberalism" in which the state takes no interest in virtue or individual ends only in the second half of the 20th century. I am in fact a supporter of classical liberalism, at least of the Tocquevillian variety, which implies the need for certain values beyond the bare-bones procedural institutions to guarantee the possibility of ordered liberty.

With all due respect to Prof. Jaffa, his otherwise erudite book on Lincoln is but a slender reed standing in the gale of modern opinion that maintains that rights are only positive or culturally relative. Would that he has convinced *these* opponents as thoroughly as he thinks he has. His real argument is with them, not with me.

Britain and the Intellectuals:

Ferdinand Mount suggests that critics of modern Britain are too pessimistic ("Britain and the Intellectuals", Summer 2001). He accuses us of saying that the country has suffered "unrelieved decline" and alleges that we are guilty of nostalgia for a past that had many faults. I would plead not guilty on all counts. In my book, *The Abolition of Britain*, I give what I feel is an honest account of the dinginess, poverty and narrowness of the Britain that has gone, not least the horrible food we used to eat. But I note that these things were accompanied by a peace, safety, freedom and order now as vanished as the lost city of Atlantis. My view is not that we should have stayed in the past but that we chose the wrong future, and that we could easily have become as prosperous as we are now *and* a good deal more civilized

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had we not trashed our culture and morals.

As for Mr. Mount's symptoms of alleged success, real estate prices are high because of a shortage of building land combined with epidemic divorce, leading to an inflated demand for housing so that former husbands and wives can maintain separate establishments; the "arts", about which he seems so enthusiastic, are a national shame, taxpayer-funded warehouses full of non-representational junk, dead animals in formaldehyde, unmade beds, etc.; and the "relaxed" race relations of which he is so proud have recently been revealed to be far from relaxed in several northern industrial towns, where Asian youths have firebombed white-owned premises and vice versa, amid serious rioting. The hospitals are also dirtier and more violent than they used to be, and the schools, if possible, more illiterate. As for all that privatization, the Tories may have turned a few state monopolies into private monopolies, but they nationalized childhood by conniving at the destruction of marriage and the family. I think I know which of the two was more important.

PETER HITCHENS
Oxford, England

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Three cheers for Ferdinand Mount. In his essay in the Summer issue of *The National Interest* (and his earlier *TLS* article, "Farewell to Pudding Island"), he has elegantly mocked the latest "decline of Britain" Jeremiahs. He does so using the same weapons as his adversaries—personal impressions and autobiography. Such "state of the nation" writing tends to be a fact-free zone, which is one of the enjoyable yet ultimately unsatisfying things about it; more than most kinds of writing, this is where your own prejudices, or your underlying judgement about the writer, count most. Norman Podhoretz is a man whom many people respect, so we sit up and listen when he says that Britain has gone to the dogs. But the only evidence he can produce to damn the country (on the basis of a three day visit to London) is the fact that the National Portrait Gallery now displays portraits of pop stars. This is no more than Podhoretz nostalgically recalling his three years in England thirty years ago when he was in his prime and life seemed so much more promising than it does today.

Many of the Jeremiads—especially those that appeared in the foreign press around the time of the British election in June—are part of a familiar media readjustment. Around the time of Tony Blair's election in 1997 our over-politicized commentators—in Britain and abroad—hailed the arrival of "Cool Britannia" and a transformed country. In my judgement things have got a bit better in the four years since; some people will plausibly argue that they have got a bit worse, but those same dirty hospital wards and run-down estates discovered by foreign reporters earlier this year were there (and in a worse state) in 1997, too.

If anything, Mount downplays how interesting British life and politics are at present. The intellectuals dislike the government for its technocratic demeanor and its failure to pay homage to them—but Blair's attempt to marry market liberalism and social democracy is certainly not uninteresting, not to mention the huge programme of constitutional reform which has been calmly implemented after a century of argument.

Yes, Britain was very different thirty years ago. There was more class, religion and empire (although the latter had largely gone), and the educated elite had more cultural power. Now there is less constraint, more market, more people whose main goal in life is individual fulfillment. It is livelier and, yes, for some people, more disordered and unhappy. Some of this is the result of changes in attitudes and values arising from the 1960s, but much of it is also due to the changes associated with Margaret Thatcher, supported by many of the people who now regard Britain as a busted flush.

DAVID GOODHART
Editor, *Prospect*
London, England

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The Lesser Evil:

With continuing debate on whether the United States should withdraw from the Balkans, Richard Betts' insightful article ("The Lesser Evil", Summer 2001) is timely, indeed. Unfortunately, his preferred alternative (American withdrawal) is flawed.

Betts offers a superb analysis of U.S. moral and material stakes in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, the real U.S. stake is no longer about Kosovo or Bosnia; it's about NATO and the U.S. role in Europe. . . . After Bush pledged to the Europeans: "We came in together and we'll leave together", a "cut and run" policy will ruin U.S. credibility and reinforce an unfavorable image of this country as "the cheap superpower." U.S. allies will not accept a division of labor in which America bombs a country and Europe is left to reconstruct it. Worse, complete U.S. withdrawal from the region may result in escalating violence and may ultimately undo what has been achieved in the last six years. The cost of the U.S. presence in the Balkans is often inflated. U.S. forces there have already been cut significantly (e.g., in Bosnia, from 21,000 in 1995 to about 3,600 at present.) Arguments that U.S. deployment in the Balkans has a strong negative impact on readiness, while not without merit, are exaggerated. In some ways, U.S. soldiers in the Balkans get better training than they would get at a home base. Also, the retention rate for U.S. troops in the region is higher than the average.

In summary, the costs of complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from either Bosnia or Kosovo would be higher than the costs of maintaining a reduced presence in the region. Hence, the best the United States can do at the moment without incurring the enormous risks of complete disengagement is a moderate (negotiated within NATO) reduction of its troops.

DESSIE ZAGORCHEVA
political science department,
Columbia University

Betts replies:

The arguments in my article that addressed Ms. Zagorcheva's two main points are not noted in her letter but remain unrefuted. I wrote, "Credibility should serve . . . substantive objectives, but it should not dictate what those objectives are." Asserting the need to preserve credibility as reason to persevere in a mistake is the sort of self-entrapment that the Vietnam experience should have discredited. Reinforcing failure does not rescue credibility, it just postpones the damage.

Like many supporters of intervention, Ms. Zagorcheva focuses on the immediate costs of withdrawal, which would indeed be appreciable. But she does not suggest an alternative to indefinite and indecisive occupation, which I consider immoral, half-hearted imperialism. She recommends further reduction of a thin occupation force. I argued that if NATO is to be serious about reconstructing local politics enough to make withdrawal without renewed war a reasonable bet, it should intervene far more strenuously and coercively, as in Germany and Japan in the late 1940s. This might give liberal reform—now a fragile imported veneer over an unresolved substructure of conflict—some chance to take root.

Indefinite but weakening occupation is the worst of both worlds. It might last a long time, like the feckless UN presence in Cyprus, but eventually it is likely to be overwhelmed by a local bang that produces a NATO whimper—a worse result than phasing out occupation sooner, on our terms, rather than under duress and in disarray. If the European allies disagree about how to handle the mess in their neighborhood, they are free to carry the ball. Americans should not let the value of solidarity be made a warrant for doing the wrong thing. If the NATO that could survive Suez will crumble because of a disagreement about disorder beyond its borders, better to find out now.

Who's Afraid of Mr. Big?:

Josef Joffe ("Who's Afraid of Mr. Big?", Summer 2001) brings us a long way toward understanding why there has been so little military balancing against U.S.

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dominance over the past decade: the United States has continued to provide international public goods, and yet has largely resisted the lure of military unilateralism. His cogent argument nevertheless understates the danger of American unilateralism and the importance of American self-containment, especially in relations with minor powers.

Joffe argues that America's hard power "inspires discomfort, not existential angst", because a hegemonic power that does not conquer will not provoke military balancing. The confinement of most post-Cold War balancing to the cultural and diplomatic spheres supports this claim, but Joffe leaves unanswered the question of how America's current allies can judge America's future intentions. There are few situations where U.S. interests directly conflict with those of all its key allies, and hence rarely has the United States had to choose between conciliation and imposing its will unilaterally on the major second-tier powers. However, past behavior is not all that is at issue here. Leaders of second-tier powers are concerned with discerning America's *future propensity* to impose its will through aggressive unilateral action. If that propensity is believed to be high, then leaders would be rational to balance against what could become a marauding hegemon. . . .

The best available proxy for America's propensity to impose its will on current allies is probably its behavior in relations with weaker states. . . . If the United States wants to reassure Europe and the rest of the world that it is—in military terms at least—a benevolent hegemon, then it must actively practice restraint, largely refraining from unilateral military action even against states too weak to resist coercion. Otherwise, the satisfied powers of Europe may no longer accept that the American military is largely benevolent, and they will then intensify their balancing efforts in both hard and soft power arenas.

In evaluating possible unilateral interventions, the U.S. government must therefore consider the growing ability of weak-state adversaries to adopt a strategy of casting American actions as indicative of a propensity toward aggression. Serbs who pinned targets to their clothing were claiming to be human victims of NATO aggression, but they were also trying to send a message to Europeans and others: "You, too, may one day be a target." Their message was blunted by the NATO consensus for intervention, but a clever future target of unilateral American intervention may be better able to mobilize the latent fear inherent in the growing disparity in military power between the United States and its allies. U.S. military superiority allows intelligent adversaries to adopt jujitsu-like strategies in which America's hard power-based intervention against them is redirected into a counterstrike against America's most valuable soft-power resource: its image as a highly constrained and moderately benevolent hegemon—to borrow Joffe's analogy, as an elephant rather than a voracious tyrannosaur. . . .

It is sometimes argued that America's system of separated powers and the demise of the dichotomy between domestic and international politics has emasculated U.S. foreign policy. This may be true, but it may also be a good thing if it helps to maintain the U.S. role as an institution-building hegemon that avoids ill-conceived unilateralism in defense of secondary interests. As Joffe suggests, stability will be best assured if America's limited diplomatic resources are devoted to providing leadership in areas where collective action problems prevent the achievement of international public goods. While a coherent long-range foreign policy which recognizes that action inspires reaction is highly desirable, it is also probably unattainable. In its absence, the United States may be tolerably well served by its constrained and *ad hoc* response to challenges, since a bad strategy can be more dangerous than no strategy at all.

JAMIE MORIN
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Yale University

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Joffe replies:

Methinks that Jamie Morin's thoughtful response to my article is built around a faulty analogy. The issue I addressed was: Why is there (as yet) no serious balancing against the United States as the world's unquestionable numero uno? Looking toward the future, Morin warns: America's allies will watch very carefully how the United States treats weaker states; the more the United States beats up on them, the more prone they will be to "gang up" against No. 1.

Why would this be so? Since World War II, the United States has dealt quite harshly with lesser nations. Apart from North Korea and Vietnam, the obvious cases, the United States has intervened in, or punished from the air, various Central American countries, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Iraq and, of course, Serbia. In the last three instances, the allies actually went along. Indeed, most of them only did so because the United States (finally) took the lead.

There is also a logical problem. Why would the allies conclude from the fate of the weak to their own? They, after all, are not Nicaragua or Serbia, but serious middle-weight contenders tied to the United States by myriad bonds. Paris, Berlin or Rome might be riled by America's muscle plays in distant climes, but they will carefully weigh their resentments against their stakes in good relations with the "indispensable nation."

Which is exactly where the real problem lurks. The more unilateralist and oblivious American policy, the more dispensable Mr. Big will become. Former and future rivals like Russia and China will find it easier to separate Europe from the United States and even organize *ad hoc* political coalitions against No. 1. Unilateralism spells self-isolation—that is the critical danger facing U.S. policy. In that respect Jamie Morin is right, even if, as I believe, for the wrong reasons.

Poltergeist Economics:

Anatol Lieven's wrong and wrongful characterization of me in his comments on my book, *Failed Crusade* ("Poltergeist Economics", Summer 2001)—"Cohen is a Marxist"—raises serious doubts about his capacity for understanding historical and political writings. Indeed, though I have had many critics over the years, none, so far as I can recall, has ever before made this mistake or (in the American context, as he no doubt knows) allegation about me.

However distasteful, I feel obliged to report, because of ongoing controversies about post-Soviet Russia in which I am playing some part, the following: Apart from my longtime affection for Groucho and his comedic comrades, I am not now, nor have I ever been, a Marxist—intellectually or politically. In a favorable review of the Russian edition of *Failed Crusade*, a St. Petersburg writer understood the book, or read it more carefully, than did Lieven: "Stephen Cohen is not a Communist, a socialist, or even a social-democrat."

I write this letter in the hope that it might encourage Anatol Lieven to explore more truthful and complex explanations for analyses he does not like.

STEPHEN F. COHEN
Professor of Russian Studies
and History
New York University

Lieven replies:

I had assumed from Stephen Cohen's explicit sympathy for Nikolai Bukharin—a Communist who could only be described as "moderate" in the context of Stalinism—that Cohen too, if not a Marxist, must at least have had certain Marxist sympathies. If this was an error, I apologize. This was not by the way intended as a slur or "allegation", as Cohen states in his curiously hysterical and defensive letter.

What is even odder about his letter however is that it suggests that my review was strongly hostile to Cohen's arguments concerning post-Soviet Russia. In fact, as even the most

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minimally careful reading would show, though I may differ with Cohen on many aspects of the Communist past, I find much of his analysis of the Yeltsin period, and of Western policies during that period, both sharp and accurate. On the other hand, I also made clear that while Cohen's latest work is an interesting polemic, Reddaway's and Glinsky's book is a much more solid and permanently valuable contribution to Russian studies. I suspect that it is this judgement that Cohen finds truly hurtful. Perhaps if he had devoted himself more to scholarship, and less to public polemicizing, his work too would have had greater weight. □

Extreme Unction?

When you write that "we now enter upon the age when the defence of sovereign immunity has been held to be void", you sound, I'm sorry to say, almost as callow as Mary Robinson, the UN's human rights commissioner, whose windy optimism has made her a laughing stock from Beijing to Havana.

—David Rieff to Christopher Hitchens
Prospect (London), August/September 2001

◆

When Mary Robinson and Amnesty International caution that a liberal agenda has gone too far, you know it's gone off the deep end.

Yet both the United Nations high commissioner for human rights and the London-based human-rights group warned last week that the UN conference opposing racism slated for Aug. 31 to Sept. 7 in Durban, South Africa, could be derailed by extremists.

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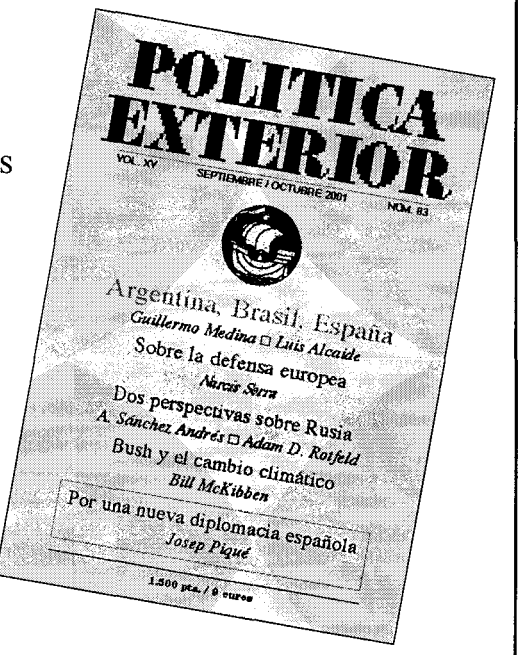

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The Present Opportunity

Adam Garfinkle

THE IMPRESSIVE depth of insight that has abounded on the pages of *The National Interest* since its inception is due to its many talented authors and to Owen Harries, the master editor who alternately welcomed and summoned those authors to his designs. After several years away from Mr. Harries' tutelage, all but kidnapped by a retired four-star Air Force general, I have been chosen to carry on his work. Having paid close attention to the magazine's progress in my recent captivity, I want to use the present opportunity of writing in this space to illustrate what can come of a careful reading of these pages. Here, then, is a sketch of the international circumstances in which the United States now finds itself, and what those circumstances suggest for American strategy; it derives in the main from the labors of others, nearly all of them published in *The National Interest*.

AS SEVERAL commentators have observed, the period since the end of the Cold War has taken its most commonly applied name—the post-Cold War era—from what it is most prominently not: It is not the Cold War. For obvious reasons, this is not a very satisfying state of affairs for describing the affairs of state, but it has led to an edifying game played by a coterie of policymakers, analysts and journalists to "name that era."

The early frontrunner in this contest was the "new world order", a candidate still in vogue in academia, particularly outside the United States. But being merely a rubric for a series of three speeches, only one of which was ever delivered by President George Bush père, and having so little actual content that it left far too much to the imaginations of cloistered college professors and deadline-panicked newspaper columnists, this contender soon fell out of the running in serious circles.

In due course the field narrowed to three claimants. The first is the "era of globalization", a popular term—as James Kurth argues in this issue[1]—because it points to a cluster of U.S.-promoted technology-driven phenomena that have imposed themselves on international reality in recent years. But much like "new world order" it is variously used and often abused. Not only are many different and sometimes inconsistent meanings attached to it, but reality threatens to tarnish its generally positive gloss. Some thoughtful observers fear that the acceleration in global economic activity wrought by more integrated financial and trade networks may also work in a negative

Adam Garfinkle is editor of *The National Interest*.

[1]Kurth, "The Next NATO" (Fall 2001), p. 6.

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direction, not least because a previous epoch of globalization turned out to come equipped with a powerful reverse gear.[2] So "globalization" has not yet won the competition outright.

The second serious contender is "the unipolar moment" of American primacy, introduced by Charles Krauthammer in 1989.[3] A member of *TNI*'s editorial board, Krauthammer has lately returned to this theme, proclaiming a Bush Administration doctrine of unilateralism.[4] It is not clear if, or to what extent, Krauthammer himself favors this approach to U.S. foreign policy, or whether he is merely describing what he sees. (He has promised to clarify the matter in a future issue of *The National Interest*.) Also unclear is whether the second Bush Administration has such a doctrine, or whether Krauthammer simply presented it with one as he did in the case of the first. Perhaps he will illuminate this question, too.

Either way, this choice of locution—less sonorous variations include "Pax Americana" or "American hegemony"—is very much in the running. Again, however, it is more popular abroad than it is in the United States because, in practical terms, American policymakers do not feel hegemonic. They know that, despite America's preponderance of power in the world as a whole, they cannot easily have their way anywhere—not even in the Western Hemisphere. This is partly because the balance of interests can be as important as the balance of power, so that U.S. preponderance is offset in particular regions by the larger stakes and more focused attention spans of local protagonists.

It is also partly because American primacy is a function of its capacity to provide common security goods and, by so doing, to reassure others of its generally benign intentions. That being the case, as Josef Joffe points out, U.S. attempts to impose itself on others are frequently self-negating.[5] As another *TNI* board member, Samuel Huntington, has explained more broadly: "The superpower's efforts to create a unipolar system stimulate greater effort by the major powers to move toward a multipolar one", resulting, for the time being at least, in a "uni-multipolar system." This means that the "settlement of key international issues requires action by the single superpower but always with some combination of other states; the single superpower, can, however, veto action on key issues by combinations of other states."[6] In this formulation, American primacy is real enough, but American unipolarity or hegemony is not.

The third candidate is, of course, Francis Fukuyama's declaration of "the end of History."[7] After an initial spasm of mass misunderstanding, it became clear that Fukuyama was no apocalyptic. He was referring to a philosophical legacy, that of Hegel, and he meant something roughly similar to what Daniel Bell had suggested nearly thirty years earlier: the "end of ideology", the end of serious practical argument over first principles of political philosophy. In the 1960s, however, many otherwise intelligent people believed that a homogenizing technological juggernaut would bring about the convergence of capitalist and socialist systems and, in so doing, reduce all questions of value in politics to mere techniques of management. Fukuyama argued in 1989

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[2]See Fouad Ajami, "Their Gilded Age—and Ours" (Spring 2001).

[3]Krauthammer, "Universal Dominion: Toward a Unipolar World" (Winter 1989/90).

[4]Krauthammer, "The Bush Doctrine", *The Weekly Standard*, June 4, 2001.

[5]See Joffe's comment in this issue, p. 150.

[6]Strangely enough, Huntington's analysis did not appear in *The National Interest*. See "The Lonely Superpower", *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1999), pp. 36-7.

[7]Fukuyama, "The End of History?" (Summer 1989).

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not that technology had produced political convergence, but that a struggle of titans had left only one system standing, with the result that liberal institutions were in incipient triumph worldwide.

Even understood properly, the end of History thesis has been very controversial. But then so have versions of globalization and assertions of a unipolar moment. Beyond controversy, perhaps there has been a reluctance to choose among the candidates because all three carry a certain appeal.

INDEED, THERE is an element of truth in the underlying logic of all three propositions. Each hints at a defining characteristic of our time, but a characteristic whose full significance emerges only in relation to the other two. This is perhaps because each of the three bases itself in a different ultimate source of causation in world affairs. Globalization fixes on economic dynamics, American primacy on power politics, the "end of History" on the sway of ideas. Since we know upon reflection that all three sources are in play all the time, perhaps we may synthesize a winner by bringing them together.

In its basic, unadorned definition, globalization is merely a description of how new information technology has stimulated the integration of world financial markets, the refinement of production and marketing techniques, and the expansion of international trade. But it is globalization-as-ideology that accounts for its underlying attraction. As ideology, globalization is the phoenix of functionalism. The idea that economic rationality could, and one day would, overturn the more muscular logic of power politics has maintained a tight grip on the imaginations of Western intellectuals and idealists of all stripes. From Richard Cobden to Norman Angell to John Foster Dulles, the belief that free trade, and the prosperity it would create, was the solvent of war could barely be dislodged from its pedestal despite accumulating and well nigh overwhelming empirical evidence that it was just not so.

It is almost too easy to ridicule globalization-as-ideology as the flip-side of Marxism. Whereas Marxism was a form of economic determinism derived from a combination of 19th-century positivism and Rousseauean ambition, globalization-as-ideology has been described as a form of economic determinism based on the present macroeconomic consensus as contained in the country analyses of the International Monetary Fund. Though glib, such a description is not that far off the mark, and ridicule is not an entirely inappropriate reaction to those who believe that the "golden straightjacket" of Thomas Friedman's imagination will do for global peace in mere decades what thousands of functionalist-minded revolutionaries, preachers and world federalists have been unable to do for centuries.

But to ridicule globalization-as-ideology is to overlook a more fundamental development of which globalization is just a reflection. That development is the emergence of advanced forms of knowledge-based economic systems in which science is harnessed institutionally to market-driven technological innovation. These systems have transformed the very basis of wealth. While one can exaggerate the "dematerialization" of the post-modern economy—and many do exaggerate it—it is nonetheless true that knowledge, social trust and institutional arrangements that knit them to the market have become more important to the overall success of an economy than sheer size, brawn and the mass of physical resources. Just look at places like Singapore and Israel, and then at places like Russia and Congo, and the point becomes clear enough.

As with the "post-Cold War" label, we lack a good term for this transformation—New Economy is the best we have

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so far. Be that as it may, these structural changes, uneven and gradual as they have been, bear enormous political implications. They have much weakened the historic bond between possession of territory and physical resources on the one hand and national power and military strength on the other. In the past, serious and protracted economic competitions almost invariably led to security competitions—and those competitions led often enough to war. But at least in the advanced parts of the world, national elites no longer credit this bond.[8] Indeed, in those places where economic vitality *and* competition are defined by the cybernetic age, major war among such countries has become unthinkable—a state of mind that helps to bring about its own reality.

A defining characteristic of the present era thus flows in part from this economic transformation and the growing sense of what it means: the "deep peace", the very low prospect of a hegemonic war that convulses the entire edifice of international security. The unipolar sway of American power contributes to the deep peace (we come to this just below), as does the existence of wildly destructive weapons, but the qualitative transformation of economic (and social) structures—to which John Lukacs alludes above[9]—is a more important source of it.

This recognition, in turn, allows us to see globalization in a proper light. As description rather than as ideology, globalization is enabled by this transformation, which preceded it and gives it its content, so to speak. Since New Economy structures can empower states as well as weaken them, depending on the talents and political institutions of those who govern, major states are not helpless in the face of onrushing economic integration, nor is their sovereignty being significantly eroded by it.[10] The leaders of such states have not become mere economic ciphers; they are as relentlessly political as ever. It is just that they see no security-based reason to resist such integration, while they recognize several economically self-interested reasons to promote it.

The second characteristic of the present era is American primacy, a condition that elides significantly with the environment of deep peace which, as Coral Bell has argued, is likely to persist for at least several decades.[11] The United States is often referred to as a status quo power, and that is true in the sense that it is not revisionist when it comes to global political or security affairs. Certainly, an environment of deep peace appeals to the United States. But while U.S. primacy will tend to reinforce stability at the structural level defined by the interactions of the major powers, it will tend to generate instability at most every level below that. This is because the uneven spread of advanced knowledge-based economic systems bear revolutionary implications for much of the planet. New forms of market-based economics are liable to be even more disruptive of traditional relationships than older incarnations. A certain level of convulsion is to be expected, too, from the introduction of the ideas of self-determination and genuine pluralist politics to societies that have not known them. That the United States is the primary power, and that, in the face of enormous resistance, it supports by word, example and deed the spread of such systems and ideas, suggests general implications that are anything but status quo.

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[8]See Carl Kaysen, "Is War Obsolete?", *International Security* (Spring 1990).

[9]Lukacs, "1945 and All That" (Fall 2001), p. 141.

[10]See Linda Weiss, *The Myth of the Powerless State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[11]Bell, "American Ascendancy—and the Pretense of Concert" (Fall 1999).

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The third characteristic of our age can be summed up with the observation that Fukuyama, whatever second thoughts he himself has had, was more right than wrong.[12] An alternative way of describing the triumph of Western liberal values, as Michael Mandelbaum has done, is as the triumph of Wilsonianism. Mandelbaum argues that the eclipse, by the end of the 19th century, of pre-modern conservatism—support for political absolutism, economic aristocracy, and rigid social hierarchy—and then the defeat of fascism in 1945 and of communism in 1991, has produced a near consensus on what constitutes international "best practice": self-determined national independence grounded in law-based democratic governance, free markets and free trade, and a security regime defined by agreed limits, informal and formal, on the use of force. The sway of such values may be uneven and, in many cases, may be invoked hypocritically, as La Rochefoucauld wrote, as the homage that vice pays to virtue; but no alternative now operates on a global scale. Therefore, as Mandelbaum put it, the name of the current age has been "hiding in plain sight": It is the age of Wilson.[13]

The ascendance of Wilsonian values to near universal best practice over the last century, however, would have been inconceivable without the ascendance of the United States as a great power. Similarly, the near monopoly power of those values today is, or ought to be, indistinguishable from the fact of American primacy. As is evident, too, both Wilsonian norms and American primacy reinforce, and are reinforced by, the weakening of the link between economic and security competitions. The unthinkability of major war among advanced democratic countries flows not only from underlying economic changes and from the assurance that American power supports the deep peace; Wilsonian premises work as a powerful cognitive complement to both.

Taken together, these three facets of the contemporary environment define the age of New-Economy American Wilsonianism. Admittedly, the phrase is aesthetically deficient, but it captures what neither "globalization" nor "the unipolar moment" nor "the end of History" can convey by itself. It serves to remind us, too, that economic, power-political and philosophical elements always combine (in varying mixes) to shape an era.

WHAT strategy should the United States adopt for an age of New-Economy American Wilsonianism? In essence, it should adopt one that expands the deep peace, preserves American primacy, and spreads Wilsonian institutions worldwide. With one noteworthy exception, each of these objectives reinforces the other two, just as the phenomena on which they are based reinforce one another. Taken together, they define the enlightened self-interest of the United States in this still new century.

Note the order, however; it is important. Maintaining the deep peace is a realist project, which, if it is not commuted successfully, will prevent the United States from doing anything constructive. It should not be taken for granted. The deep peace is vulnerable because some major powers—and many substantial middle powers with a capacity to cause considerable tension and disorder—have yet to enter the cybernetic age or to build a truly advanced economy. Counting on a new form of economic rationality to trump all other urges is therefore surely premature. Moreover, the present age of globalization has yet to withstand a major economic contraction, and no one knows how the

[12]Fukuyama, "Second Thoughts" (Summer 1999).

[13]Mandelbaum, "Bad Statesman, Good Prophet" (Summer 2001).

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new economic forms that enable globalization will be affected by it.[14] Thus, one does not need a conservative's sense of the tragic to know (though it helps) that a major war cannot be completely ruled out. Northeast Asia is one place where a combination of global recession, nationalism and the historical baggage associated with it might help to trigger one off.

It is also a realist project, at least in part, to maintain American primacy, and there is no reason to apologize for it. It is not immoral, or even amoral, to do well in the world if that is what ultimately enables one to do good. But to the extent that American primacy involves soft power—the attraction of its values and culture—the job of maintaining it transcends the traditional realist calculus (and also explains why American primacy is not ordinarily imperial). As G. John Ikenberry has argued, America has been an "empire by invitation" in which the invitees have been able to borrow American assets without forsaking their own, even as the "open and institutionalized character of the American order has minimized the possibilities of hegemonic excess over the long term."[15]

The maintenance of such an order requires a sense of strategy that appreciates the critical role of healthy alliances, and the care and feeding of such alliances among democracies means taking seriously the trans-realpolitik elements that helped to form those relationships in the first place. It also puts a strategic premium on what Joffe aptly calls "supply-side diplomacy" and what others term the provision of common security goods.[16] Such diplomacy often involves American leadership in issues that may benefit others more, and cost them less, than it benefits and costs the United States. But, overall, the United States gains from such efforts the consent of most others to its leadership. We live, then, in a world in which it has become realistic for the United States to do things that are not narrowly realist in character.

Then, finally, there is the project of promoting Wilsonian values. As suggested above, the potential for disruption in political and security relationships on account of economic and social changes afoot is large, and it is larger in some already beleaguered parts of the world than in others. As a result, this third project does not automatically or necessarily reinforce the other two. We could undermine the peace by deploying a one-size-fits-all-circumstances policy on self-determination as collapsing states generate major regional crises. (Rajan Menon examines the potential Indonesian example above, but there are others.[17]) We could jeopardize American primacy by undertaking promiscuous nation-building interventions in places with diplomatic failure written all over them.[18] Such promiscuity would squander credibility, raise resentment, and erode military morale and readiness on a large scale.

We have to approach failed states crises as a category of choice in which we do neither too little nor too much. As usual, selectivity and discrimination will stand us in much better stead than the urge to comprehensiveness and consistency, and one appropriately Wilsonian criterion for selectivity is the prospect for democratic development. The United States ought to take a close interest in the

[14]A point I make in "Set the Alarm for 2011", *New York Times* (Book Review), February 3, 2001.

[15]Ikenberry, "Getting Hegemony Right" (Spring 2001), p. 22. The phrase "empire by invitation" is taken from Geir Lundestad.

[16]Joffe, "Who's Afraid of Mr. Big?" (Summer 2001).

[17]Menon, "Another Year of Living Dangerously?" (Fall 2001).

[18]See the arguments in Richard Betts, "The Balkans: How to Get Out" (Summer 2001).

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fortunes of new democracies and young market-based economic systems. Leon Aron is right to argue that such polities are better described as pre-liberal than illiberal democracies.[19] In the long run, too, their success will contribute to the achievement of the first two American projects.

But not all developing countries have too little democracy and too few market-based institutions; rather, some have too much or too many too fast. An undifferentiated campaign to hoist the spread of Wilsonian values above all else will make things worse, not better. Besides, successful liberal institutions are almost invariably home-grown, so that it is the capacity for indigenous democratic development that ought to be the first measure of whether particular humanitarian crises are best handled by cautious triage or, very occasionally, by assisting in nation-building.

Otherwise, we need to concentrate effort at two points: problems most amenable to solution through more robust campaigns of preventive diplomacy, and problems so dangerous that we have no choice but to face them. Of the latter sort, most grave is the threat of mass-casualty terrorism. Those parts of the world most roiled by the age of New-Economy American Wilsonianism are natural sources of anti-American resentment. Beyond the possibility of nuclear missile attacks against the United States, it is a matter of serious concern that advancing biotechnology threatens to put very dangerous substances into the hands of rogue states and terrorist groups (including domestic ones) on a scale heretofore unimagined.[20] This is not a problem off to the side of U.S. national security policy but one central to it, for the vulnerability of the American homeland, left unredressed, will severely reduce the flexibility, credibility and political base of any activist U.S. foreign policy.[21]

WHILE THE UNITED States does face many dangers, its opportunities are at least as impressive. It is good that senior Defense Department officials are insisting that the country be prepared not just for near-term challenges but for those two decades hence. (That they dare to face down the hidebound and the bureaucratically craven in the process is also to their credit.) At the same time, it has been disheartening to find no evidence of senior State Department and White House officials thinking about what sort of world we want to see 25 years from now, and how to achieve it. More than an eighth of the way through the current administration's term, neither the President nor the Secretary of State has made a speech even touching on America's longer-term international goals. Instead, President Bush has delivered two major addresses, one on missile defense and nuclear military issues and one about a military alliance: NATO. (Secretary Powell has yet to give a major speech on U.S. foreign policy.) As Zbigniew Brzezinski, a frequent contributor to these pages, has pointed out, observers in other countries may be forgiven for wondering why the United States—the most powerful and wealthiest democratic power in history, in the most tranquil security environment perhaps since the Treaty of Westphalia—should be emphasizing publicly threats to itself rather than its positive plans for international leadership. It is a genuine puzzlement to them, and not only to them.

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[19]Leon Aron, "Poor Democracies", *The Weekly Standard,* July 16, 2001, p. 26.

[20]Note Fred Charles Iklé, "The Next Lenin" (Spring 1997).

[21]As argued by the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century in *Roadmap for National Security: Imperative for Change* (Washington, DC: USCNS/21, March 15, 2001).

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Now, during the Cold War we in the West had books, articles and even political committees emphasizing "the present danger", and in those days that was just the right focus. Those books and articles—as well as that committee—did a world of good. We still have books with such titles and, yes, the world is still a dangerous place; but we should be thinking at least as much and at least as creatively about the present opportunity, defined by the historically extraordinary coincidence of the deep peace, American primacy and the ascendancy of Wilsonian values. Such thinking will lead quickly to two general conclusions.

First, it is impossible to conduct an effective supply-side diplomacy unilaterally. Unilateralism will generate gratuitous resentment and prove exhausting, counterproductive and uneconomical in every sense of the term.[22] Sometimes, as a matter of discrete policy choices, the United States will, and should, find itself isolated—opposition to the International Criminal Court is an excellent case in point. But auto-isolation as a tenet of strategy is harmful to American primacy at a time when, strange though it may sound, we cannot act selfishly without the cooperation of others. That is why it is important to articulate aspirations for a better world that are worthy of the unprecedented opportunity before American statesmen today.

Second, to conduct an opportunity-based strategy successfully, the United States must act without arrogance or self-absorption. It is properly selfish to make it easy for others to associate their interests with the international security and economic system with which the United States is identified, and from which it benefits so handsomely. That requires special attention to tone and an unflagging awareness of the persistence of incompatible perspectives, even among putative friends. Shakespeare put it nicely:

> O, it is excellent
> To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
> To use it like a giant.[23]

But, for present purposes anyway, it has been put even better: "Success requires an awareness of the intractability of a world that does not exist merely in order to satisfy American expectations."[24] That's the key to the national interest. □

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[22]See Peter Rodman, "The World's Resentment" (Summer 2000).

[23]*Measure for Measure*, Act II, Scene 2.

[24]Owen Harries, "'Exporting Democracy'—and Getting It Wrong" (Fall 1988), p. 12.

There are many nations where the American ideal of self-government in liberty is simply irrelevant. In those cases we have to accept that fact—while using our influence to encourage a little movement in the direction of political decency, as we understand it. . . . Most of the time, since World War II, we have been doing just that. Our problem has been that we have been so reluctant to explain to ourselves, much less to the world, what we have been doing and why. When it comes to foreign affairs, our inherited habits of mind, and the rhetoric associated with them makes this kind of candor painful to us. So we actually feel and seem hypocritical when we are merely being sensible. The rest of the world of course assumes that behind this superficial hypocrisy lies much realistic cunning. One almost hesitates to disabuse it of this belief.

—Irving Kristol

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